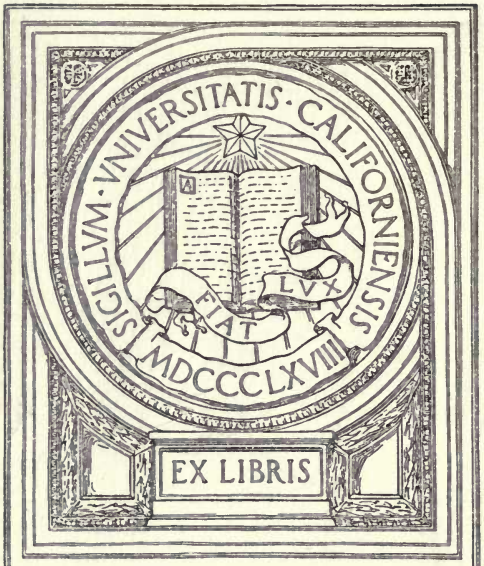
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WOOL

AND

WOOLLEN MANUFACTURES

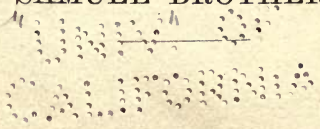
OF GREAT BRITAIN:

A Historical Sketch

OF

RISE, PROGRESS, AND PRESENT POSITION.

SAMUEL BROTHERS.



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PREFACE.

THE following pages are far from advancing any pretension to studied elegance of composition; but we believe they contain a correct review of the most interesting phases in the rise and progress of British Woollen Manufacture.

We thought, and still think, that a subject in which the nation at large is so greatly concerned cannot be without a peculiar degree of interest; and we have been at great pains to search every record which we could get access to containing any fact or sound reflection.

We propose to ourselves to submit the matter to our readers in the division which has rendered it most readily appreciable to ourselves; and we trust that this division will be found equally convenient by others.

The First Part will contain a rapid review of the commercial history of wool and its manufactures:

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The Second Part, the natural history of wool:

And the Third Part, the mechanical history of woollen manufacture, comprising the manipulation of the raw material and of the fabric, during the various processes to which they are respectively subjected, and the engineering matters connected therewith.

SAMUEL BROTHERS.

29, Ludgate Hill, *June 24th*, 1859.

WOOL AND WOOLLENS;

A Historical Review of

PROGRESS AND PRESENT POSITION.

Solid merits of British manufacture.

No matter in what department of productive industry we survey the condition of this country, the result is ever to induce amazement. This results not so much from a perfection in external means of captivation, such as artistic design, or the gloss of superficial finish, as from a solid and permanent usefulness, which commands the preference of the world, and from the stupendous magnitude of our operations.

In many parts of Europe, and especially in France, Italy, and some parts of Germany, we are greatly excelled in the lighter and more ephemeral graces of manufacture; and we are very generally secondary in our pretensions to classical design.

In the United States, where labour is far more costly than in Great Britain, we are outrun

in the production of many low-priced manufactures. But still our own productions obtain the same preference as heretofore, even in the markets into which this class of American goods has found its way.

Energy of British enterprise.

But what is chiefly amazing in the position which we have achieved, and so long maintained, as a manufacturing people, is, that this success has been attained in spite of almost every possible adverse circumstance, arising from the mistaken views of the governing classes. If enactments could have chilled the ardour of our enterprise, or suppressed the heaving energy within us, it is hardly possible that we could have equalled the Dutch, Flemish, or Germans, or even the narrow-spirited Portuguese. If being periodically plunged into artificial distress, by selfish or mistaken policy—if expulsion, at the bidding of fanaticism or class interest—if ruinous restraint could have for ever driven the spirit of advancement from our shores, we should certainly have been a nation feeble as to numbers, no less than as to our external influence.

Whence derived.

It is a curious, instructive, and pleasant matter for speculation to what then is due a result so strikingly contradictory. Is it to any peculiarity of national character, which we owe to our mixed

origin and to the amalgamation of institutions originating in each fraction of the parent races? Is it to geographical position? Is it to mineral or vegetable wealth, which, without any very glowing character, has proved a steady and swelling source of internal prosperity and external power?

Probably each of these causes has exercised its own peculiar influence, and all have, by their combined effects, contributed to the great result.

In recent times our spirit of colonization, in which we enjoy a peculiar aptitude for success, has doubtless greatly tended to enhance our external influence and to stimulate our domestic industry. But our spirit of colonization is itself a result of national character, geographical position, and some other and social causes. Moreover, the Venetians and Genoese were colonizers long before the Portuguese, Spaniards, and Dutch; and all were colonizers, if not before us, at all events far more advanced than we.

Maritime superiority has done much; but this, again, is the result of the other causes mentioned; and in this we have succeeded to the Venetians, Pisans, Genoese, Portuguese, Spaniards, Dutch, and Danes. Even the French have been before us in maritime enterprise. And it must be remembered that, whereas we

were already characteristically a manufacturing and mercantile people before the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and made great progress in these respects from the time of the Restoration, our flag was, during the greater part of the 17th century, insulted almost with impunity, even close to our own shores.

Coal and Iron important auxiliaries.

It is a favourite theory with some economists that the secret of national wealth, power, and prosperity is centred in agriculture; that to be really independent at home, and powerful abroad, the industry of every people should fully feed them out of their own soil. But we are inclined to think that the peculiar mineral wealth of this country has done much more to develop its manufacturing skill, to promote its prodigious mercantile prosperity, and to secure a power and ascendancy quite out of proportion to its extent or numerical strength, than could have been achieved by any amount of agricultural abundance. We have ceased for some length of time to produce a sufficiency of food without sacrificing our independence, and to the great furtherance of our commercial ascendancy. Coal and iron are vast resources in our hands, which are exempt from vicissitudes of season.

Probably our geographical position, occupying as we do the salient situation of all maritime Europe, may have been of some avail to the rising spirit of enterprise characterizing our modern history. We command the North Sea and the Baltic, and form an advanced work before the Flemish and Dutch ports, once so aspiring and still so flourishing. The Baltic, upon which a large proportion of the out-going and in-coming merchandise of the Hanse Towns, in their palmy days, was borne, is closed by nature for several months in the year. Hamburg and Antwerp, subject to all the complications of Continental oscillations of power and politics, were rather tributaries than dangerous rivals to the commerce of the Thames. Germany, remarkable for the steady, plodding, persevering industry of its people, could find no other outlets than those which were opposite to our shores. The watershed of central Europe, north of the Danube, all trends in our direction. The barrier of the Alps interposes between the German plains and the ports of the Mediterranean. Constantly harassed, moreover, by religious or dynastic contests, and accustomed to become the great battle-field of Europe in arms, Germany was not calculated

Effect of geographical position.

to be uninterruptedly productive; and it must be allowed that it is freedom from interruption which is, more than anything else, indispensable to successful manufacture and commerce.

That Genoa, Barcelona, Carthagena, Cadiz, and Lisbon ceased to control the trade of the world after having once done so, may probably be attributed to the absence of an energy of national character sufficient to resist the baneful influence of evil policy, and finally to direct the policy of the state. If one were pondering in wonder that the fine bay of Naples, with its glowing climate and exhilarating atmosphere should not be a great mart, one might perhaps explain the phenomenon satisfactorily for one's self in glancing at the slumbering indolence of the Lazzaroni. If one chanced to look upon Stamboul, and be struck with the site as the key of the whole Levant, wonder would cease at its commercial secondariness, after the sight of one group of listless Turks. All of these great emporia become the tributaries to our commerce, instead of its rivals, because we have the energy to explore them incessantly for the productions which can be found in them; but above all, because we

have had the energy to make our own domestic industry, to a great extent, master of its own fate.

Importance of woollen manufactures.

Of all the branches into which our manufacturing industry and skill have been distributed, none has been of more importance in its best days, none is of more remote origin, and none has had to undergo more trying vicissitudes than the preparing, spinning, weaving, and felting of wool.

Since the close of the last century, to be sure, the prodigious progress of cotton manufacture, whilst it has contributed improved spinning machinery for wool, has materially decreased the comparative value and importance of the woollen trade. Nevertheless, even now, British woollen manufacture is still deserving of great consideration.

Instinctive application of the properties of wool.

From the earliest ages of history we find that the properties of wool, as applicable to the weaving of some sort of fabric for the purpose of human covering, had been turned to account. Instinct seems to have pointed it out as the most available and healthy material. In the hottest as well as in the coldest climates, in which the people had advanced in the art of clothing themselves beyond the

Primitive spinning.

primitive method of using the fleece, skin and all, we find some sort of woollen fabric—some ruder or more finished kind of homespun—to have been made and used. In many parts of Europe, even to the present day, the simplest method of spinning with a hand-staff* and single spindle is still used, and found to answer all the purposes by supplying the domestic wants of the people. In some places the spun yarn is wrought entirely into a kind of knitted work. Sometimes it is rudely dyed, at other times it is used without any artificial colouring, whether it be white, black, or brown;—or, where two or more of these colours are at hand, it is mixed up before it is spun, in the most homely way being *willied*† (or, more properly, combed) together with rude combs by the children.

Ancient fables, as well as probable traditions, point to the estimation in which the fleece of the sheep, as the principal wool-bearing animal, was universally held; and, seeing that

* Some persons appear to suppose that this practice is confined to the manipulation of flax. This is a mistake. It is applied chiefly to long-stapled wool. Wool of short staple, even, and cotton are not always more or less carded and spun from some kind of wheel. The distaff and spindle are used by the natives of India.

† So called process of disentangling.

the earliest state of a very great part at least of the people of Asia and Europe, as well as of some regions of Africa and America, was wholly pastoral, no other use can be detected for the numerous flocks but the utilization of the fleeces. The milk was doubtless used for diet as well as the flesh; but these uses would render a very small number of animals, whether goats or sheep, sufficient, and all others as worthless from superabundance: whereas, we have every reason to believe that wealth was calculated more by the number of the flocks than by any other criterion.

Primitive knitting and weaving.

Besides the method of knitting, already noticed as one of those still in use in several parts of Europe, for converting the woollen yarns into a spread of stuff, there are several rude weaving-frames also still in use for the manufacture of this species of homespun; and they have every appearance of being primitive, or very nearly so, and are probably of very remote origin. Indeed, we have the most credible authority for the fact, that the spinning and weaving of silk, cotton, and flax had been brought to a high state of perfection in China, India, and Egypt, full 2300 years ago; and it is but reasonable to suppose that the same

art should have been applied to wool, where that was the prevailing staple. The simple hand-loom, so dexterously used by the natives of India, for the finest muslins as well as for the coarsest calicoes, is perfectly applicable to laying the web and weft of any material.

Still used in Portugal.

In the mountainous parts of Portugal, and notably in the provinces of Tras os Montes and Entre Douro e Minho, a simple and primitive apparatus of the same kind is still used by the peasantry for the manufacture of a rough kind of woollen cloth, which is dyed a dark-brown. This apparatus consists of mere warp-beams and a hand-shuttle, and is very probably the same as that which has been used from time immemorial; for the Portuguese peasantry are not, and never have been, a very progressive people. Even in the palmy days of the great Dom Henry, and when the commerce of the coasting towns vied with any in Europe, and even when the academies were in their highest prosperity, the peasant population of the hills was unimbued with any spirit of progress, and wholly uninstructed in any but the rudest arts directed to the supply of common wants. Nor could it be otherwise in a country where there are no roads, and

never have been any, and where the only monuments of engineering undertakings, other than those dating from modern wars, are such as remain the lasting evidences of certain Roman military stations.

Ancient woollen fabrics of the Levant.

We know that the people of the Levant, and especially of the coast of Syria, of Asia Minor, and of Egypt, had attained considerable proficiency in the art of preparing, spinning, and weaving wool, as well as in dyeing it, at a period anterior to the age of Greek or Roman prosperity. The same circumstance has been noticed as attributed to some of the Tartar nations of Central Asia, and to the people of Northern India. It is difficult to judge of the relative antiquity of any art amongst these people, because their traditions and records are very imperfect—very doubtful at best—and so mixed up with evident fables, that one is at a loss to determine how much of the whole is imaginary. Judging, however, from the general tendency of Asiatic customs to continue, with but slight alteration, age after age, it is not at all improbable that the ruder and more primitive methods of weaving wool were, in these countries respectively, coeval with their settlement. The dominant popu-

lation in our time, however, being mostly stamped with the Mogul type, it is difficult to say whether these Tartar, and originally pastoral, nations introduced or adopted the method of wool-weaving such as we observe it. The probability seems to be, that they introduced it, because they were, from time immemorial, engaged mostly in pastoral pursuits; and, as their conquests in Persia and Northern India are comparatively recent, the art of weaving, if introduced by them into those countries, would have been of much more recent date there than in Western Europe.

Of Persia, India, and China.

Yet there is reason to believe (as already stated) that the people of some parts of India were conversant with the art of spinning and weaving, as applied to cotton-wool, at an earlier date. It was noticed by Herodotus, and afterwards by Strabo (subject to very natural mistakes); wherefore it might even be that the people of the north learnt to weave wool from the inhabitants of the cotton-growing regions. The ancient Persians had certainly attained a very advanced proficiency in the manufacture of fine woollen fabrics more than 1500 years earlier than the Mogul irruption; and the country stretching to the south-eastward of the

Caspian had been dimly known to the ancients as the emporium of sumptuous woven fabrics. The beautiful embroidered or pattern-wrought woollen fabrics of these regions, and the elaborate silk stuffs of China, were imported by the Greeks and Romans through the Levant; and the Greeks themselves, even before the time of Herodotus, manufactured coarse woollen as well as linen cloths. When the Moguls swept across the southern territory of Russia, in the 13th and 14th centuries, and even reached the Carpathians, threatening the confines of Bohemia, they do not appear to have arrived in the guise of naked savages, but to have astonished the ruder Europeans by the elaborate character of their woven fabrics, chiefly of silk (doubtless derived from China) and wool.

Even at the earlier date, when the Roman Empire crumbled before the irruption of innumerable and hitherto unknown hordes, poured from the same teeming centre of sandy wilderness, the barbarians do not appear to have been without woven covering, although some are described as wearing skins. And if, in occasional instances, the Latin writers, long accustomed to a finer class of manufacture (either as made by themselves or obtained from Asia Minor,

Syria, and Egypt), superciliously describe the covering of their enemies as coarse and unseemly, it is not the less evident that these so-called savages taught the conquered people more than they learnt of them in several respects. Again, no sooner had the Arabs (or Moors) made themselves masters of territories in the south of Europe, than they proved themselves to be the most skilful and advanced manufacturing people of the modern world. And whence could these people have derived their knowledge of fine weaving, and of the implements requisite for it? Or how, if they had not traditionally possessed it, would they have preserved it through a career of mere military irruption? Could they have acquired this knowledge from the Egyptians, when comparatively few issued from or through Egypt, or at all events were never settled in that country? True, the Romans, whether in Italy, Sicily, or in their Spanish colonies, had arrived at a high degree of perfection in the manufacture of woollen cloths.

The beautiful carpets of the East exhibit in their use no traces whatever of very modern origin; and they are the perfection of one kind of woollen spinning and weaving, no less than

of dyeing before manufacture. They are mentioned with admiration at a very early period, and everywhere the immemorial custom of squatting, characteristic of most primitive people, but especially so of Orientals, is suggestive of the remote antiquity of these carpets. Might not the daïs of Xerxes or Darius have been covered with material essentially similar? Is there anything in the positive records handed down to us by the Greeks which disproves the possibility of this? It is, at all events, evident from the description given of the Persians, whether in the days of Thermopylæ, Marathon, and Salamis, or in those when Alexander traversed Asia—by the Greeks themselves, who affect to despise all other people,—that the Persians, or, more properly speaking, all the Levantine people, were far more advanced in the manufacture of textile fabrics than the haughty denizens of Athens, Sparta, or Corinth.

Woollen fabrics of the patriarchal age.

It may properly be inferred that the Hebrew Fathers, in their nomad or patriarchal days even, and before the sojourn in Egypt, were conversant with the art of weaving, and even of dyeing wool, or, at all events, were in intimate communicaton with people possessing

those advantages; for draperies of various kinds are continually referred to in their history. What, for instance, could have been Joseph's coat? What were their tents and personal draperies? They were essentially shepherds, in countries in which wool was the most readily available fibre or pile; and it is quite clear that, after the departure from Egypt, the Hebrews were, or soon became, highly proficient in the arts of spinning, weaving, and dyeing in various ways, and that they found cunning craftsmen in these arts also amongst their immediate neighbours, or the people who were subjected by them in the territory of Canaan.

It is a matter of doubt to how great an extent vegetable fibres, or the more delicate animal fibre, silk, were used at those early times; but as vegetable fibre is not so naturally presented to the ingenuity of men in a primitive state, and is not generally converted into a textile fabric except with more minute elaboration, it is highly probable that the wool of the sheep and goat, and even of some other animals, had been used at least as early as any other fibre. Nevertheless, it is historically very probable that the Egyptians used flax fibre

for weaving into fine cloths, the East Indians cotton, and the Chinese silk, at a very remote period.

The use of wool unknown in some parts of Africa and America.

In some parts of Africa, as well as of North and South America, we may meet with aboriginal tribes who do not seem conversant with the art of spinning and weaving wool. The aborigines of the tropical regions of both continents use the leaves of various palms for hut-covering, and are expert at plaiting or warping fine grasses, and threadling minute ornaments upon them. But where their personal covering consists of other material besides these plaited or warped articles, it is mostly found to consist of skins, with or without the hair, decorated by being ripped into fringes round the edges. No texture of spun or woven wool, or even cotton is met with amongst them. In some parts of central South America, to be sure, coarse but well-wrought cotton textures are met with, but they are made by the half-caste or semi-civilized Indians, who have learnt the arts of spinning and weaving from the Spaniards and Portuguese. The same general remarks apply to the Kaffirs in their aboriginal state, and as they have become by intercourse with the Dutch and English.

We would infer from these various considerations, notwithstanding the few exceptional cases which present themselves as mentioned, that there is an universality in the manufacture of available fibre, and especially of wool, which renders its origin in any given quarter very obscure, but, in all cases, extra-historically remote.

Peculiarities of Oriental wool.

There is another curious fact which is, in some degree, suggestive in reviewing the rise and progress of woollen manufacture, namely, that the Oriental wool, whether of the goat or sheep, has at all times been susceptible of conversion into finer, if not more durable, fabrics than the European; although, since the great improvements of Saxon wool, the latter has the advantage of *softness*, so essential to fine-napped cloth. In modern times, the arid hills of Spain have fed a race of animals yielding a very fine wool, and latterly the successful introduction of the same race into Saxony, where its good qualities have been greatly enhanced by careful breeding and treatment, has raised the wool of that country to the preference of the manufacturer for all fine fabrics. But still, as of old, Oriental wool continues to be unsurpassed in every essential quality

except that of softness, although it be not so accessible for the loom-worker of Europe.

Strange is it, that after having flourished for so many ages, and attained such undoubted perfection, in the countries producing the finest wools, the manufacture of woollen fabrics should have finally found an asylum in which it was destined to rival, if not to excel, its greatest former excellence, and whence it was destined to affect the commercial and even the political relations of all Europe, in England, which, though it produced wool in large quantities, never produced it of the finer qualities!

Origin of woollen manufacture in Great Britain.

In Great Britain it is doubtful whether the permanent introduction of woollen manufacture be due to the Romans or to their successors. The ancient inhabitants of this island, as they were found by the Romans do not appear to have been conversant with the art of weaving wool. The Romans, themselves very expert weavers and dyers, however, availing themselves of the advantages of British pasture, established woollen manufactories at every convenient station; and we learn, in particular, that one of these, the principal market for the wool as well as the chief seat of the manufacture of woollens, was established at Winchester, then the most

important and flourishing town in the realm. Whether or not this branch of industry was uninterruptedly sustained during the many vicissitudes which immediately followed the dismemberment of the Roman Empire, is not certain. The Saxons certainly revived or continued it, but whether unceasingly is not evident. If it were so continued, it was subsequently extended under the patronage of the Normans; if it were not, it is said to have been re-introduced by them, during the reign of their first British Sovereign, through some Flemish weavers who were encouraged to immigrate and settle near Carlisle. The Flemings were at that time the people of Northern Europe the most advanced in various branches of manufacture, and especially in that of linen and in that of preparing, dyeing, spinning, and weaving wool, and at this period they had already attained a high degree of perfection in cloth-working. There was, however, as it would seem, a very striking difference between the description of fabric made before this period and that which had previously been made by the Romans, after a method derived by them from the Levant. The Flemish and Anglo-Saxon textures, of date anterior to the 11th

century, and the Anglo-Flemish fabrics until the 14th century were simply spun and woven, and but very imperfectly dyed. In so far as they were felted at all, this was the result of mere accident, more properly speaking, than of art, whereas the Oriental and Roman woollen stuffs (wrought from the soft Tarentine and Milesian fleeces) had, at an early period, been subjected to pressure, to secure the advantage of the felting properties of the wool, and possessed the advantage of the use of Levantine dyes, then proverbially pre-eminent. Indeed, they had probably achieved a degree of perfection which was not again attained until the end of the 17th century.

Early manufactures, properly speaking, worsteds.

It is a question if indeed in these early stages European, and formerly a great part of the Asiatic, woollen manufacture did not more properly belong to that branch which we technically call "worsted," than to that which we call "woollen," *par excellence.* Most of the homespuns of the European mountain peasantry, or of remote colonial settlements, even to our day, are, strictly speaking, "worsted" workings. The wool requires to be combed rather severely to make it spin and draw off continuously from a single hand-staff, or from

a wheel if partially carded, and, what is more, none but wool of a longish staple is conveniently available. Again, the spinning cannot be moderated without risk to the yarn, so that, after the combing and spinning, the wool has lost much of its "felting" property. In truth, fabrics of this kind are neither perfect "woollens" nor perfect "worsteds," but partake, to a certain extent, of the characteristics of both.

And even where the web frame and shuttle were used, and the wool was all carded before spinning, sufficient care was not taken to sort the wool, nor was any special appliance used to answer the purpose of "fulling."*

Felting or fulling of wool in remote times doubtful.

Some writers seem to infer that the felting properties of wool were those soonest turned to account in manufacture, and that the earliest production of the nature of cloth was neither spun nor woven, but simply felted by heat and pressure (or beating), as the beaver-wool is for hats. Upon what authority this statement is made does not so clearly appear; and whoever pays attention to the history of customs, whether of European or Asiatic nations, (the people of Asia Minor excepted) or examines with care their most primitive woollen

* Hereafter to be described.

draperies, would, I think, arrive at a contrary conclusion.

Softness is the quality most essential to effectual felting or fulling.* The operation itself depends for its success upon the most careful discrimination of practised hands, and upon more elaborate manipulation than any other process required to produce fine cloth. Besides that, the very essential quality of softness in the material depends so much upon incessant attention to the rearing, feeding, and sheltering of the sheep as to be inconsistent with any condition but one of high social advancement.

Softness essential for felting; result of careful treatment.

Length and fineness were the qualities, of old, most universally esteemed in wool; and these depend more upon the natural varieties of the animals, climate, soil, and so forth, than upon high artificial cultivation. Spinning and weaving are straightforward and simple operations in the ruder forms.

Length and fineness natural properties.

These remarks do not, however, apply to the Romans in the height of their prosperity, or to the people of Asia Minor, who became subject to them; for it was the softness of the Tarentine (Italian) and Milesian (Asiatic)

Softness of the Tarentine and Milesian fleeces.

* Hereafter to be described.

fleeces which constituted their great excellence; and it was the same quality, which they afterwards developed in the Spanish flocks by crossing them with African and Tarentine sheep, which produced this excellence of their fleeces —an excellence which, through this race of sheep alone, has been preserved to our time, and has been subservient to our manufactures.

Broad-cloth manufacture not traced before the 13th century.

During the period of the Anglo-Saxon domination, that is to say, particularly, between the 6th and 10th centuries, and on its re-revival in this country, whether at the period of the Norman Conquest, or, as is far more probable, after the first Flemish Emigration (A. D. 1102), the woollen manufacture was clearly not directed to the elaboration of the finer fabrics, nor even of the coarser kinds of what are technically called broad-cloths. It is only from the beginning of the 13th century that these latter fabrics are to be traced as having been made, and then to a much greater extent in Flanders and Brabant, and more particularly at Ghent, Bruges (the principal linen market), and Louvain, than in England. It is doubted by some, upon apparently good grounds, whether broad-cloths were manufactured in England before the middle of the 14th century.

Chiefly in Flanders.

Indeed, so inconsiderable were still the manufacturing efforts of England, that this country continued until the 14th century (as will be hereafter explained) to export nothing but raw wool, and to import the greater part of the woollens required for consumption, whether coarse or fine, from Flanders, whither the raw wool was annually sent in large quantities. England exporting raw wool.

Even a century after the introduction of the fabrics called broad-cloths, and when the manufacture of woollens, in England, had been so greatly extended as to have brought about an annual exportation of manufactured woollens, it was only those of the coarsest description which our ancestors could supply to the continental markets.

In the advanced condition of the manufacture, such as it was at the height of Flemish prosperity, and even long after that, moreover, we must judge of the fineness of the cloths by a species of mental comparison, bearing in mind that the Spanish wools had not yet been reinstated in their former excellence; that the Flemish cloth-workers of this period had probably used those materials, at most, in small proportions, even such as they were; and that the manufacturers of England, before the end

of the 17th century, were not adequately provided with the material for making what we should call very fine fulled stuffs; for the wools of England, which were most largely used by the Flemings, and, naturally, by the English weavers (after they had become the consumers of the raw material), were not of the best clothing kind, although they were probably better than they are now for that purpose.

English wool not of a good clothing kind.

There were two or three varieties of English sheep yielding short and tolerably fine clothing wool; but these were not unexceptionable as to colour (pure whiteness). Hungary, which possessed some breeds of sheep yielding admirable clothing wool, was remote and inaccessible, in a commercial sense, from the seat of manufacture; and Saxony did not, until long afterwards, contribute its admirable soft wool to the loom.

Such was the position of the trade, both as regards the raw material and the quality of the manufactured commodity, at the period when modern British woollen manufacture was destined to erect itself into an important interest.

If, indeed, it be true that any substantial

encouragement was extended to foreign or native weavers by William the Conqueror—whether, owing to the troubled reigns of his successors, or to a predominating ascendancy of territorial feudalism, suspicious and jealous of the plodding, enterprising, and improving burgher-class, which included all the manufacturing population; or to the rankling hatred of the unmixed races; or to the scrambling excitement of the Crusades, and the confusion which they occasioned; or to the domestic and dynastic troubles; or to some external influences, originating in the League of the Continental Free Towns or in the aspiring republics of the South,—the woollen manufacturers received but a scant share of countenance from succeeding sovereigns. They were either left to shift for themselves, and to struggle as best they could under social conditions not very favourable to their prosperity; or, what was still worse, they were subjected to vexatious interference and restraint, which, if not sufficient to damp their energy, seriously interrupted their progress.

State of the trade under the first Norman kings.

The occasional acts, indicative of a solicitude on the part of the crown for the welfare of the trade, which was thereafter to become

Important epoch. Reign of Edward III.

the principal craft of Great Britain, were fitful exceptions until the steady and systematic policy of Edward III. The reign of that sovereign therefore may be said to form the most decisive and most important epoch in the history of woollens.

But, to render the progress of the trade the more readily intelligible, it will be necessary to recur to an earlier period, and trace its various fluctuations and their immediate causes.

Retrospect of the trade.

It is perfectly clear that the Anglo-Saxons, before the Norman Conquest, were considerably advanced in the arts of spinning and weaving different materials, but especially wool, and that they had arrived at a degree of ornamental excellence beyond which figured fabrics did not pass for a very long period. The simplest form of loom and hand-shuttle, as well as the distaff and single spindle, was in common use amongst them. It was considered an essential part of female education amongst them to be rendered expert with the distaff and spindle, as well as with the embroidering needle. Even the ladies of the court, and most noble families were carefully instructed in the coarse and simple, as well as in the highly ornamental work connected with the manufacture

of woven materials and chiefly of woollen draperies.

Much due to the Saxons.

There is even a very colourable reason for the supposition that modern woollen manufacture owes its origin to the aptitude of the parent stock of this section of our ancestors; for the Flemings, if they did not first learn the art of woollen weaving from the Saxons, who were introduced into Flanders, in 802, in great numbers by Charlemagne, at all events acquired far greater proficiency in this art from their new associates.

Flanders had formed one of the dependencies of the Frankish settlers of Gaul. It received its feudal chiefs, or counts, from the Frank monarchs, or, at all events acknowledged the feudal supremacy of the predecessors and successors of Charlemagne. The use of flax and the art of weaving linen appears to have been known to the Flemings, even before the Saxon immigration. Possibly even the woollen manufacture, formerly so successful in the hands of the Romans, might have left vestiges of its existence, as it had perhaps in Britain also; but there is no doubt that the first great impulse given to the revival or decided progress of woollen manufacture in Flanders dates

from the Saxon immigration, effected, in 802, at the bidding of Charlemagne. It was between this period and the close of the 9th century, rendered so glorious to the Anglo-Saxon race by the reign of King Alfred, that woollen manufacture began to be actively cultivated in Britain. Some writers, following De Witt, have rather arbitrarily fixed upon the year 960 as that in which Flemish woollen manufactures originated; but this date, besides being too precise, is too late, inasmuch as we have positive proof of the existence of this branch of industry more than a century earlier.

Winchester the Roman seat of manufacture.

Winchester, which had been the principal Roman station in Britain, and had thus become the first asylum of refinement and the first seat of British woollen manufacture, had meanwhile undergone some serious vicissitudes. Repeatedly assailed and continually menaced by the hardy and indomitable Saxons, it had finally yielded, after twenty years of direct attack, to the perseverance of Cerdic. This was in or about the year 516. The obstinacy of its resistance had doubtless exposed its people and its arts to a cruel vengeance when it was finally sacked. But the wealth, luxury, and comfort of the subdued population doubt-

Taken by Cerdic, who protects the manufactures, A. D. 516.

less communicated some spirit of refinement to the conquerors. And the wise policy of Cerdic, which was decidedly preservative, was not improbably directed to protect the useful arts, and especially that of woollen manufacture, with the advantages of which his followers were most likely to some extent familiar. Certain it is that, at a period about coeval with the Saxon revival of this art in Flanders, we find it sedulously encouraged by the Anglo-Saxon princes at Winchester. The interval of comparative immunity from trouble, which elapsed under these sovereigns, until the plunder of Winchester by the Danes, was one of great prosperity for the trade in wool. King Edgar did much to encourage and improve it. But it gradually became more important in respect of the raw material, eagerly sought for by the weavers of Flanders, and exported thither, than for the manufacture of stuffs. The subsequent plunder by the Danes, the great fire of 1102, the constant troubles of the reign of Stephen and his immediate successors, a second disastrous fire, and the depopulation by the plague, in 1348, fatally affected, not only the manufacturing industry of Winchester, but also its export trade of raw wool. And this at the very period

Decline and extinction of the trade at Winchester, A. D. 1102—1348.

during which the Flemish manufacture was making the greatest progress. Indeed, the removal of the wool market, by Edward III., from Winchester to Calais, which put a period to this trade at its earliest British emporium, exercised but small influence upon the national manufacture generally, for already the scene of its most successful operation had been shifted.

Progress in Flanders.

In the meantime the woollen manufacture of Flanders had changed character. The single spinning and weaving, already noticed, had been improved upon. Varieties of processes were successively adopted, and varieties of textures produced. Fulling and dyeing were brought to a high state of perfection, and fine woollen cloths were the result.

Flemish immigration in the North, A. D. 1102.

By a strange series of coincidences, moreover, whilst the time-honoured manufactures and trade of Winchester were being extinguished, a series of accidents was forcing back the Flemish woollen manufacture, with all its improvements, upon other parts of England. In the year 1102, a distructive inundation in Flanders compelled numbers of weavers to seek refuge in England.

The English rulers, little alive to the great advantage which might be reaped from this

calamity, rather checked than encouraged this immigration, so that it was, for the time being, but partially productive of those great benefits to this country which afterwards accrued. The immigrants were removed to the wilds of the North, and some of them distributed amongst their countrymen already settled about Carlisle. Some time afterwards many of these weavers were again removed into South Wales, Herefordshire, and other parts, and, to some extent, encouraged to communicate their knowledge to the people.

Origin of the West of England trade.

This transposition was the foundation of those manufactories of the West of England which afterwards attained such deserved celebrity.

In the northern and midland counties.

About the same period the manufactory of woollen stuffs was established at various places both in the northern and midland counties; and between the middle and close of the 12th century, that is, during the reigns of Henry II. and Richard I., we find guilds erected for this branch of industry at York, Lincoln, Oxford, etc.

Hitherto, however, the manufacture of woollens generally, and of cloth in particular, had been extremely limited in England. The wool trade consisted chiefly in the exportation

of the raw material to Flanders, where the manufacture was in a great degree dependent upon this supply.

Prohibition of trade with Flanders: revoked, A. D. 1297.

Nor did the manufacture make any progress or flourish during the reigns of King John, Henry III., Edward I., and Edward II. The unfortunate foreign wars and domestic commotions of this trying period paralyzed all branches of industry. Shortly after the accession of Edward I., and before his return from Guienne to England, he made a temporary arrangement of differences with the Countess of Flanders. But this was of brief duration. To be revenged on the Flemings, and perhaps also with a view to promote the home manufacture, Edward prohibited the exportation of wool or any other merchandise to Flanders. But this prohibition was revoked by a treaty of reciprocal commerce, concluded in 1297.

Decline of Flemish manufacture.

Flemish manufacture, now at the zenith of its prosperity, was on the eve of a rapid decline, out of which the British was to achieve its own supremacy.

Disturbances in Flanders, A.D. 1300—1328.

The Flemings, gorged with wealth, had become arrogant and impatient of restraint or domination of any kind; Ghent soon set the example of revolt. The Counts of Flanders

levied certain taxes. In 1300 and 1301 one of these imposts offended the turbulent townspeople. The revolt was, however, suppressed, and many inhabitants who had been compromised retired to Louvain and to Holland; and from Louvain, again, driven by the consequences of new acts of sedition, they finally sought refuge in England. The fatal arrogance of the Flemings at the same time plunged them, in 1304, into a war with William, Count of Holland, by whom they were twice severely chastised; whilst, unfortunately for them, their connection with France involved them in the war between that country and England. In 1325, indeed, the principal cities obtained the favour of a separate peace at the hands of Edward II.; but this respite was only employed for a new revolt (of which Bruges was the centre), in 1328, against the reigning Count; a revolt which was signally unsuccessful.

Continued Flemish emigration to England.

All these circumstances, like the first revolt of Ghent and the subsequent insurrection of Louvain, led to the rapid and continued emigration of Flemings to England, and amongst these were many of the ablest weavers, fullers, and dyers. In the meanwhile, also, the sceptre of England had passed into the vigorous grasp

of Edward III., who was not slow to turn to account the confusion prevailing in Flanders.

Settlement of John Kemp and others, A. D. 1331. Favoured by Edward III.

To give a satisfactory stimulus to Flemish immigration, a grant of special protection was made, in 1331, in favour of John Kemp, a celebrated Flemish cloth-worker, and of all his assistants and effects, as well as of all able weavers, dyers, and fullers, who should be inclined to take advantage of this privilege and settle to carry on their trade in England. In 1338 several laws were enacted for the so-called encouragement of the home manufacture, such as that* which prohibited the use of any other cloth but that of English fabric; and several provisions were also made to encourage the settlement of foreign weavers in England. In the same year an Act was passed, prohibiting the exportation of raw wool.

Legislation on the woollen trade, 1338—1340.

But this law was rendered all but inoperative by the exercise of the royal authority, in 1340, if indeed it was ever really respected. What is extraordinary, however, is that the exportation of woollen fabrics was also prohibited by Parliament, whereas the exportation of raw wool (briefly interrupted during the reign of Edward I.) had been virtually allowed without any

* 2 Edward III., c. 5.

other restraint, since 1297, than the dead-letter law of 1338. In 1340, to be sure, Edward III. imposed the enormous duty of forty shillings (equal to about £6 of our money) a pack on raw wool exported.* Parliament, however, remonstrated against this imposition as illegal, although this remonstrance was rather levelled at the tax than at the violation of the Act of 1338. And the exportation in that year (1340) amounted to 30,000 packs, each containing 364 lbs., and valued in all at about £150,000 (equal to about £450,000 of our money).

Exportation of wool and its value in 1340.

In pursuance of his purpose of invading France, as well as of encouraging and exalting English woollen manufactures, Edward III. had also availed himself, in 1335, of the turbulent spirit of the Flemish towns to incite them to a general revolt, which resulted in the expulsion of the Count, the passage of the English army through Flanders, and the establishment of the most intimate relations between the Flemings and the English—relations which subsisted until the accession of the Burgundian dynasty, in 1369.

Intimate relations with Flanders, 1335—1369.

* A similar tax had been levied by Edward I., also upon the simple royal authority, in 1296.

The various improvements thus derived from close intercourse with the Flemings, and from their several migrations to this country, whether stimulated by special encouragement or by the calamities of their own country, had erected our woollen manufacture into an important interest. In the year 1355, woollen cloths to the value of about £10,000, and worsteds to the value of nearly £7000, besides felted fabrics worth some £6000, and raw wool worth £190,000, appear amongst our exports; and in 1357, the Mayor and Common Council of London fixed the market for woollen cloth at the Blackwell Hall. Still, in 1355, we were exporters only of coarse woollen cloths, of which some 5000 pieces were worth, then, £10,000; whereas we were still importers of fine cloths to the value of £10,000, being less than 2000 pieces in quantity.

Value of the trade in 1355.

Woollen market at the Blackwell Hall, 1357.

We do not infer from this that fine cloths were not made in England at that time; but this branch of the manufacture was still in its infancy, and had not yet the command of any foreign market.

Exportation of *Woollens* to Flanders from about 1400.

Early in the 15th century the English manufacturers had already secured a sufficient ascendancy, and become expert enough to com-

mand a market for their fabrics in that very Flanders whence their forefathers had derived their skill, and accordingly, in consequence of some jealousy on the part of the Dukes of Burgundy, they had endeavoured to close the Netherlands against our woollens—a step which was met in England by the conditional exclusion of any goods exported from their territories. In the reign of Edward IV. the manufacturers of woollens in England had become sufficiently influential to obtain an enactment prohibiting the importation of certain varieties of woollen manufactured goods, which, practically, included all for which there was any demand, thus securing for themselves a complete monopoly of the market (3 Edward IV., c. 3); whilst, by a previous Act passed in the same year, the exportation of raw wool was confined to English merchants, and the destination limited to Calais.

Price of finest scarlet cloth limited to 16*s.*, A. D. 1489.

In 1489 the maximum price of the finest scarlet cloth was fixed at sixteen shillings a yard (equal to about £2 of our money). This, however, was cloth of the finest quality then known, and equal, if not superior, to the finest Flemish fabrics of the 13th and 14th centuries. Gradually declining in Flanders, this manufacture

had been as steadily improving in England for upwards of 150 years, until, by the close of the 15th century, it had attained its greatest perfection, amongst the similar manufactures of modern Europe, in this country. Not that the finest woollen cloth made in England, even at this period, was to be compared with the Spanish cloth, so called, of a century later; because, as we have already had occasion to remark, the material for the manufacture of the latter was not yet employed, or was used only upon a very small scale, by the cloth-workers; but that it was the finest that could be made with the wool until then used, probably even in Flanders, certainly in England, and continued to be so until the general use of Spanish merino wool, combined with the application of French improvements to machinery, brought the woollen cloth manufacture to a higher degree of excellence, afterwards perfected by the introduction of the machinery required for cotton fabrics, and of the still more applicable material furnished by Saxony.

Gradual introduction of Spanish wool.

At what date the free use of Spanish wool was introduced into Flanders does not very clearly appear. It is probable that this very important change had been gradual, and that

before the period now in question, the finest of Flemish cloths, which continued to find a market in England until the prohibition of foreign woollens under Edward IV., had been made with an admixture of Spanish wools, the improvement of which had obtained much attention in Arragon and Castile during the 14th century. That the existence of a supply market for the raw material, in Spain, was known even to the English manufacturers, and had been so for a considerable time, is to be inferred by the provision (exceedingly impolitic as it was) inserted, in 1185, by Henry II., into the patent confirming the charter of the London weavers, which prohibited the use of Spanish wool, on pain of having the cloth burnt.

It is not at all unlikely that during the intervals when the Flemings were prevented from obtaining supplies of English wool, they turned their attention more assiduously to the produce of Spain.

Hence the period when a change of this kind occurred decisively was very probably towards the close of the 13th century. The prohibition against the exportation of *raw wool* passed in 1338, although it was but partial in

its operation, might also have tended to force the Flemings to seek more actively for other sources of supply. By degrees, from this period the large increase in the English manufactures had more effectually checked the exportation of wool in such a manner as permanently to reserve it for home consumption, and to stimulate a considerable increase in the breeding of sheep and the inclosure of pasture-lands for the supply of wool to the home looms. So great, indeed, had become the domestic demand for wool, that its high price, the increased rent of pasture-land, and the depopulation consequent upon the greed of the landed aristocracy for inclosure, led to serious complaints in 1521 and 1549.

Home consumption of wool so increased as to arrest exportation.

So that, independently of any international heart-burnings and restraints imposed upon exportation from other motives, there was a constantly decreasing prospect of any regular and permanent supply of raw wool in large quantities from this country long before the rigid prohibition against exportation which dates from the reign of James I., in 1622, and which was renewed from time to time in subsequent reigns, came into operation ; and, therefore, there was the greater reason why the manufacturers

of the Continent should look in another direction for supplies.

The depression of British manufactures during the 17th century, and the promising progress of the French woollens at that period, combined with the great increase which had taken place in the production of wool in England, occasioned the temporary return of a condition in which the exportation of raw wools became a natural operation, and the stringent statutes against it were more than a dead letter. But, in the meanwhile, Spanish wool had made its way, and established its reputation in all the principal manufactories of the Continent, and especially in France and the Low Countries.

Quality of Spanish wool in the 13th and 14th centuries.

It is not, however, to be taken for granted that up to the close of the 15th century the fine wools of Castile and Arragon, and notably those of Segovia and Saragossa, had obtained that perfection which 150 years afterwards rendered them so justly celebrated. The fine race of sheep founded by the Romans had been scattered during the convulsions of the Peninsula. The divided state of the territory, the continual conflicts between one principality and another, the Moorish wars, and many other circumstances, rendered the revival of any steady,

peaceful pursuit, such as that of properly tending sheep, a matter of very slow growth. The hardiness of the Romano-Spanish breed had saved it from the extinction which resulted to the Milesian and Tarentine races; but it was more or less bastardized. The purity of colour was lost, except in a few instances, and much time and very careful tending and breeding were required to bring the fleeces to their pristine perfection. If it be true that any advantage accrued to the Spanish fleeces from the introduction of Cotswold sheep for the improvement of the Arragonese breed, this operation was only effected in the year 1468. And the renewed importation of Barbary sheep by Pedro IV., which is said to have greatly contributed to restore the merits of the stock, only took place towards the latter end of the 14th century, and was not repeated until the beginning of the 16th century, when it was directed by Cardinal Ximenes.

Efforts made in Castile and Arragon to revive the breed of fine wool-bearing sheep.

Cotswold and Barbary sheep in Spain.

The very fact of these steps being taken, seems to prove that the reproduction of the Merinos had been slow and imperfect until that time.

It is sufficiently clear, however, that by the close of the 15th century, the manufacture of

woollen cloth in England was hardly second to any for quality, and had begun to occupy and support a very considerable part of the population. Independently of the evidence of this, derived from the frequency of legislative interference directed to regulate this trade, and from the multiplication of treaties and conventions with the Continental States, of which the ostensible object was to foster and encourage it, we derive additional and striking proof of the large share of popular interest which was centered in it from the distress occasioned by any interruption to its prosperity.

Legislation and Conventions respecting the woollen trade, 1466—1496.

During the reign of Edward IV., no less than seventeen Acts of Parliament were passed to regulate the trade in wool, or the manufacture of woollens, besides letters-patent, granted on the same subject, and the treaties of 1466, 1467, 1470, and 1472, with the Duke of Burgundy and the Hanse Towns. During the reign of Richard III., four Acts of Parliament were passed for the same purpose. And early in the reign of Henry VII. (that is, in 1493) so much distress was occasioned by the interruption of the trade with Flanders, owing to a dispute between Henry and the Archduke Philip, that an accommodation was quickly

entered into, and a new treaty concluded, in 1496.

Suspension of the trade and riots in Suffolk, 1527.

Again, in the year 1527, when the commerce with the Low Countries was once more interrupted by the league between Henry VIII. and France against Charles V., the distress occasioned by the suspension of purchases on account of the merchants in the Blackwell Hall, drove the people of Suffolk into insurrection. Nor could the mischief be allayed by the attempt of Cardinal Wolsey to force the merchants to buy. And it was found necessary to return to a commercial convention with Flanders specially, as had already been done in previous reigns.

Renewal of Convention respecting Flanders.

Conflicting legislation.

It might be inferred from some, at any rate, of these circumstances, that the true interests of the manufacturers and traders engaged in this branch of commerce, from the simple weaver who wrought the spinning frame or shuttle, to the merchant adventurers who bought in the Blackwell Hall for exportation, were properly considered and duly fostered. So far is this from being the case, however, that the multitude of regulations imposed, rescinded, remodelled, reimposed, and again rescinded, seem as if they had been devised to elicit conflicting interests and set them all by the ears.

Even during the reign of Edward III., which, notwithstanding the fluctuating and vexatious legislation of which it furnished so many examples, was decidedly characterized by greater real encouragement than any period before the reign of Queen Elizabeth, the variable influences which directed the resolutions of the Crown and of Parliament rendered the woollen manufacture one constant struggle with untoward circumstances. And even the reign of Queen Elizabeth, in which a series of external influences so decisively promoted the progress of woollen manufacture, was marked by some of the most arbitrary and impolitic enactments.

Conflicting and competing interests.

The landholders, the merchants of the staple, and the merchant adventurers had each their respective pretensions to patronize. The Merchants of the Stillyard, as they were called (that is, the foreign buyers and sellers in the English market), had their interests. The very measures which were seemingly dictated by the most paternal solicitude, were doubly injurious: firstly, by promoting an artificial or coddled state of trade, which could not withstand the shock of external injurious circumstances; and, secondly, by provoking disadvantageous combinations

abroad. And all the provisions made were alike vexatious and often offensive to the operatives.

Mischievous restrictions on the establishment of factories.

The very fact that Cardinal Wolsey should have fancied he could force a trade, by making the State enter into competition as a buyer in the market, is evidence of the very crude ideas of political economy upon which the commercial regulations of the period were based. The guilds, intended to promote the respective handicrafts which they incorporated, became injuriously restrictive. The municipal regulations forced the operatives, in many instances, out of the pale of their operation. And thus York, which had been amongst the earliest seats of woollen manufacture, and where the trade had received a reinforcement of skill in the persons of the Brabant weavers, William, Hanks, and their attendants, who were placed there by Edward III., in 1336, poured forth its industry into the villages of the West Riding. The arbitrary limitation of manufacturing establishments to certain particular counties, and, for a length of time, to certain market-towns, was found exceedingly inconvenient. And nothing can be a stronger proof of this than the spontaneous change which gradually took place in

Distribution of the weavers of York over the West Riding.

the situation and distribution of the various branches of the trade. In the time of Edward III., and subsequently, so long as the disposition then made continued virtually in force, Kent was fixed upon for the manufacture of broadcloths; Worcester, Gloucester, Hants, Berks, Sussex, Westmoreland, and especially Kendal, of cloth in general; Yorkshire of coarse cloth (afterwards known as Halifax cloth); Devon of kerseys; Sudbury of baizes; Colchester of sayes and serges; and Norwich of woollens. The heavy exactions to which the manufacturers, or native, or foreign merchants, were from time to time subjected at the caprice of the Government, rendered operations too precarious for the trade to be really healthy. The stringent regulations for the measurement, material, mode of weaving, assortment, stamping, etc., of cloths, and the vexatious supervision of the official "searchers" and "aulnagers,"* to say nothing of the vicissitudes incidental to the tedious Civil Wars of the Roses, and the fluctuating condition of all the various interests of the country, even to the social relations of the community, assuredly presented an assemblage

* Officers dating from the time of Henry I. and Henry III.

of circumstances which would have arrested all enterprise amongst most other people.

What would now be thought of laws rendering it penal to purchase and sell wool under anticipatory contracts; to export wool, or certain woollen fabrics; or to buy or sell them at other places than those prescribed by Acts of Parliament, how inconvenient soever they might be; or to traffic in those articles between certain districts of the interior? What would be thought of a prohibition against working at woollen fabrics except after seven years' apprenticeship, skill and capability notwithstanding? What would be thought of restricting any manufacturer to the use of one mill and two apprentices, and of excluding him from carrying on two branches of the same trade, so as to complete his fabrics at home? What would be thought of fixing upon the colours with which cloth might be dyed, and prohibiting all others? Can anything be more absurdly harassing to industry than such a law as that passed in 1552, forbidding any cloth-worker to abandon or change his avocation without a license to that effect, or to resume it if so abandoned?

There is not so much objection to Acts prohibiting the admixture of inferior or spurious

materials, or the use of undue hot-pressing, starch, flour, or chalk, to give bad cloth a false appearance of gloss or substance; and these enactments were so far laudable that they were directed to preserve the superiority of the British manufacture, and its credit in *foreign markets*, which was hazarded by bastardization. This is evident from the preamble of the Act of 1536, amongst others. But it is clear, from the results of such laws, that they are not so effective in working out a cure for cheats of this kind as the deterioration of value itself.

Progress of Bradford and Halifax.

Meanwhile, as we have seen, the weavers, who had hitherto exercised their calling at York, in virtue of the immunities granted to them by Edward III., having dispersed themselves in the villages of the West Riding, were laying the foundation of new townships, which should ultimately eclipse the second city of England by their industry, populousness, and prosperity. Bradford, the manorial property of the family of De Lacy, was already provided with a fulling-mill before the year 1311; but it continued to be little better than a poor straggling hamlet for some length of time. Subsequently it became the centre of active and

thriving worsted factories; and, even before the close of the 16th century, it had grown into a populous and thriving town, engaged largely in woollen manufactures. Halifax, which afterwards gave its name to the coarse cloths of Yorkshire, but which, at a later period, produced almost all varieties of woollen fabrics, was first noticed as the retreat of some of the migrating weavers in 1414. Little progress, however, was made in the manufactories of this place until after 1443. Even ten years later (in 1453), it contained but thirteen ill-conditioned houses, and ninety-one inhabitants; but twenty years after that, it had increased to 520 houses, and in 1580 it contained a population of 4160 souls.

Effects of the Reformation and Discoveries.

About the same time that these internal changes and vicissitudes were taking place, so as to endanger the ultimate prosperity of our woollen manufactures, the future of the world was pregnant with external changes of portentous importance. The Reformation was in the course of progress, and new worlds were being discovered. Navigation, no longer limited to the narrow area of European waters, was opening out extended fields of enterprise, and markets for the productions of European skill and industry, hitherto unexplored. The stream of com-

mercial transport was about, perhaps, to effect a reflux upon the East, whilst it was simultaneously pouring itself through the new channels of the West. Eastern and North-eastern Europe were revealing people ripening in taste and want for the fabrics of the West, and uninstructed in the arts necessary to produce them.

Two causes conspired to fill the ranks of the manufacturing classes, more than any other, with converts to the principles of reformation and progress:—firstly, that these classes are by habit less tied to conventionalities; secondly, that many who secretly entertained these unpalatable notions were prone to seek the mask of industrial pursuits to have the greater chance of enjoying their convictions unmolested.

It happened to be the whim of Henry VIII. to second the Reformation after his fashion; and it became the State policy, if not to encourage it to the utmost, at all events to tolerate it. And the decided bias of Queen Elizabeth rendered her distinctly the protectress of those who were persecuted on account of the reformed faith. As the policy of the Courts of France and Spain (to the dominion of which the Low

Countries had now fallen), on the contrary, was directed to oppress and destroy the Reformers, many who were suspected of a leaning to the new doctrines deemed it prudent to withdraw to the insular security of Great Britain, and these numbered amongst them generally the most skilful craftsmen of the Continent.

The French had not yet begun to cut any distinguished figure as manufacturers of textile fabrics—certainly not of woollens—although manufactories were beginning to develop themselves in the south and on the western coast, and expert weavers and dyers were not wanting in those parts. But the temper displayed by the Government towards the native Reformers, or suspected Reformers, repelled a possible migration which might have taken place in that direction; whilst Germany, harrowed with calamities no less trying, closed all hope of repose and security for the Flemish recusants in that direction. So that, denied all refuge to the south or east, the Flemings, exposed to persecution in their own country, had no resource but to fly to England.

Effects of State Policy.

The force of these circumstances was enhanced by the admixture of political elements

with the growing spirit of religious independence. For, although the power and tyranny (so to call it) of the Crown never was more undisputed in England than during the reigns of the Tudors, and especially in those of Henry VIII. and Elizabeth, it was evident that this was not so much owing to an irresistible ascendancy of the supreme authority, as to circumstances which rendered the acts of that authority, to a certain extent, congenial to the nation, and that there lurked under this dominion a growing power of popular energy, which would at all times, more or less, direct the bent of the reigning will; whereas the Continent of Europe was sinking, under the incubus of the policy founded by Louis XI. in France, and Ferdinand in Spain, darkened by the animus of the Jesuits and of the Inquisition, into a state of hopeless palsy.

This baneful influence of the councils of Madrid and Paris, enveloping, as it did (besides France, Spain, and Portugal, and the dependencies of the latter both in the Low Countries and in the New World), Germany, through the Empire, Italy and the Levant, through both Courts—in fact, the whole of Commercial Europe, except the extreme north-east and the

British Islands, was probably one of the great causes which contributed to hasten the decay towards which the Hanse Towns, in the north, and the maritime republics in the south, were tending. And thus, whilst a chill was blown upon the commercial energy of the entire Continent, the ardour of British enterprise was receiving a new and important stimulus: England was becoming the entrepôt of a large portion of that trade which had hitherto flourished in dangerous rivalry; the sturdy, but yet infant mercantile marine was meeting with unexpected encouragement, and the merchants, who, so short a time before, had been compelled to seek their choicest commodities in the marts of Flanders, were in a fair way to become, not only the depositaries of merchandise, but to bid for a large share of the carrying traffic of the world.

Second most important epoch of the British Woollen Trade.

The presumption of the Court of Spain, the cruelty and intolerable tyranny of its viceroys in the Low Countries, and the stupid and suicidal bigotry of the ruling influence in France, towards the close of the 16th century, brought about the climax of these circumstances, and rendered the reign of Queen Elizabeth the second most important epoch in the history of English woollen manufacture.

The most skilful operatives of Flanders and of the south-west of France, emigrated and settled in England, where their ingenuity and experience at once placed the woollen and worsted manufactures above the competition of any of the rival manufactures of the Continent, laid the foundation of other branches of textile fabrics (as of silk and linen), which, whilst they were destined to be carried to a high state of perfection themselves, contributed to further the improvement and extend the variety of woollens.

This third great Flemish and first French immigration added great importance to the second striking epoch in the woollen manufactures of Great Britain.

Seats of the Trade, and Legislation thereon.

A brief survey of the different seats of the trade, as they were fixed by Act of Parliament or were gradually springing up in tacit evasion of such restrictions, will be useful to convey an accurate notion of the extent to which the operations of this branch of industry were already pursued, the degree of proficiency to which they had attained, and the nature of the products thereof, as compared with those of our own time.

A large share of interest, moreover, will generally be felt in this part of the subject, as

tracing the rise and progress of those astonishing industrial communities which have finally rendered the manufacturing districts so many immense towns.

Kendal and Sudbury.

Kendal, one of the earliest seats of woollen manufacture, had risen to a high degree of prosperity, which it subsequently resigned by degrees to the aspiring towns of West Yorkshire. Sudbury, in Suffolk, was the centre of the trade in worsted goods, or woven fabrics having a worsted web or warp.

Colchester, Worcester, Nottingham, Norwich, and Bedford.

Yarns, worsteds, serges, and baizes.

Colchester had acquired some celebrity both for its woollen market and for its fine and coarse cloths, woollen yarns, and worsteds; and the villages of Dedham, Langham, etc., in its vicinity, were also peopled by manufacturers of the like commodities. Worcester, Nottingham, Norwich, and Bedford took part in various branches of the trade. It was only at the close of the 16th century that the specific trade of Colchester, in baizes and serges (*bays* and *says*), was brought to perfection by a new immigration of Flemish weavers.

Gloucestershire.

The earliest mention of a fulling and teazling mill in Gloucestershire bears date in 1175. This was in work at Berton. As early as the 13th century, the process of manufacturing fine cloths

in Gloucestershire seems not to have differed materially from that of our time, except in respect of finished machinery and dyeing.

In the 14th century, and thenceforward, Gloucester and all the principal places in the county of that name were already celebrated, more particularly for the finer qualities of closely-fulled *narrow* cloths, and chiefly kerseys, upon the measurement and stamping of which a heavy duty was imposed by Richard II., in 1394. This tax was rescinded by Henry IV., upon the earnest petition of the cloth-workers, in favour of all kerseys not exceeding 13*s.* 4*d.* the dozen yards in value. Hitherto, there had been no limit to the length of the pieces, which commonly contained about eighteen yards each. Subsequently, however, the cloth-workers, whether to evade the fiscal regulations, or for some other reason, took to making the kerseys of much greater length, until this was prohibited by an Act passed in the 14th year of Queen Elizabeth. Besides these *narrow* cloths, however, Gloucestershire, as well as Wiltshire and Somersetshire, had become largely engaged in the manufacture of red and white broad-cloths, of which the breadth was fixed by Statute, in 1551 and 1553,* at

Narrow cloths. Red and white broad cloths.

* 4 and 6 Edward VI.

seven quarters; the length of each piece being likewise fixed at 26 to 28 yards, and its weight, for white cloth at 64 lbs., and for coloured at 60 lbs. the piece. In Gloucestershire, Wiltshire, and Oxfordshire, also at the same period, a species of cloth, technically denominated *broad-listed*, white and red, was also made. It was also denominated *sorting-pack broad-listed cloth*, and was directed by law to contain between 26 and 28 yards to the piece, weighing 64 lbs., and being $6\frac{1}{2}$ quarters wide.

Wiltshire and Oxfordshire.

Broad-listed cloths.

In Worcestershire, besides the City of Worcester, numerous minor places had become engaged in cloth-making. So active was the extension, that it was thought to be prejudicial to the established factories, and, in 1535, an Act was passed, authorizing the manufacture only at Worcester, Evesham, Droitwich, Kidderminster, and Bromsgrove.

Worcestershire.

In the Welsh counties of Caermarthen, Pembroke, and Cardigan, friezes (principally) were largely made.

Wales.—Friezes.

By an Act passed in 1558 (4 and 5 Philip and Mary, c. 5), the manufacture of cloth was limited to the same cities and boroughs as previously, excepting in North and South Wales, Cheshire, Lancashire, Westmoreland, Cum-

New limits prescribed.

berland, Northumberland, Durham, Cornwall, Suffolk, Kent, the town of Godalmin, in Surrey, parts of Yorkshire not within twelve miles of York city, and the towns and villages on the river Stroud, in Gloucestershire, "*where cloths have been* usually made for 20 years." But, besides these places and districts, it is worthy of remark that, in addition to these and to the places already named, various branches of the trade were flourishing in London and its suburbs, in Wiltshire generally, at Sarum and Coventry, and in Warwickshire generally. A second Act, passed in the same year (1558), extends the privilege to the villages of Bocking, Westbarfold, Cockshal, and Dedham, in Essex. In 1576, an Act was passed (8 Eliz. c. 16), extending the privilege of cloth-making to persons residing out of boroughs in Wilts, Somersetshire, and Gloucestershire generally.

Acts under Henry VII. and VIII., Edward VI., and Philip and Mary.

In the reign of Henry VII. three Acts were passed especially relating to the woollen trade, besides others in which it was incidentally concerned, and six conventions were concluded having especial relation to it. In the reign of Henry VIII. twenty-four Acts of Parliament were passed respecting the woollen trade, besides one limiting the number of sheep to be owned

by one individual to 2000. Most of these enactments were directed to restrain the use of improper materials, to fix the price, to restrain dealings within certain prescribed limits, and to prescribe the processes, quality, and size of the cloth. One of these Acts forbade the exportation of Norfolk wool fit for "making worsteds or stammins." Another limited the manufacture of woollen *coverlets* to the city of York. A third fixed the *aulnage* (measurement duty) to be received in Wales by William Webbe, to whom the king had granted this tribute for a term of years. This name of Webbe, or Webb, is celebrated in the western counties as connected with cloth-making. A treaty of commerce also was concluded in this reign (in 1506) with Germany. In the reign of Edward VI. there were six Acts of Parliament passed specially relating to the woollen trade, and a treaty also was concluded with Sweden (1550). In the reign of Philip and Mary, there were seven Acts of Parliament having the same object. Amongst these there is one (2 and 3 Philip and Mary, c. 13) empowering the inhabitants of Halifax to buy wool. The preamble recites that the place then contained above 500 households, the growth of forty years, and that the people were

Coverlets only in York city.

employed in cloth-working, as well as the inhabitants of the vicinity. This is the first statutory mention of Halifax as a growing town.

In this reign, also, negotiations were reopened for the establishment of intimate relations with Russia.

Acts and Conventions under Elizabeth.

Finally, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, nineteen Acts of Parliament were passed, relating especially to the woollen trade, and four conventions were entered into in which this branch of commerce was the main consideration. Amongst these was one which, though generally little heeded, exercised a very striking influence upon the progress of improvement in weaving and dyeing. It was that concluded in 1579, with the Sultan Amurath, whereby the English were placed upon the commercial footing enjoyed by the Venetians, Poles, Germans, and French. The result was the formation of the Turkey Company, which traded chiefly with Constantinople, Angora, Scio, Alexandria, Smyrna, and Cyprus. The produce introduced from thence included wool, *cotton*, *silk*, and *Indian dye*, and, doubtless, also some Indian *cotton stuffs*. The Venetians had already, for some time, been familiar with the Oriental cotton and its manufacture, in which they had attained considerable proficiency. These

Turkish Treaty, 1579.

Venetian fabrics (perhaps also some Indian calicoes), through the same channel, had obtained considerable favour in England; but the acquaintance with them was comparatively limited until the Levantine trade was thrown open to British enterprise. About the same time the manufacture of cotton stuffs received additional impulse from the Flemish immigration; for the manufacture had previously found its way, on a limited scale, from Venice and Milan to the Low Countries. Thus, cotton factories were soon established in the vicinity of Manchester, and particularly at Bolton-le-Moors. In 1641, according to Roberts, the trade was already considerably advanced.

Cotton Factories of Manchester and Bolton-le-Moors.

In 1552, the colours allowed by law for the dyeing of fine cloths were scarlet, red, crimson, murrey, violet, pewke, brown, blacks (divers), greens, yellows, blues, orange, tawny, russet, marble-grey, sad new colour (?), azure, sky-blue (called watchet, and differing slightly from azure), sheep's-colour (probably not dyed), lion-colour, and iron-grey. To these were added, in 1557, friars'-grey, crane-colour, purple, and old medley.

Colours allowed in dyeing cloth, 1552.

Lincoln still continued to possess a thriving manufacturing population engaged in the wool-

The Trade at Lincoln.

len trade. Indeed, since the abolition of the monopoly obtained by the Lincoln weavers in 1348, which was rescinded in 1351, and the establishment, in 1353, of a staple or market for wool at Lincoln (as well as at Westminster, Chichester, Canterbury, Exeter, Winchester, Newcastle, Norwich, Bristol, and Hull), the prosperity of the clothing interest had attained its greatest height.

Summary to end of the 16th century.

In Kent there were still some of the most successful of the broad-cloth factories, and Canterbury continued to be one of the most important of the wool staples or markets, and was known to the French manufacturers of the 17th century as such.

Kent: broad-cloths; wool staple.

Lancashire and Cheshire (but particularly the former) were already noted for some branches of woollen manufacture. Manchester, which had obtained a manorial charter in 1301, had grown up into a place of considerable importance before the close of the 15th century, and in 1520 it is mentioned amongst the places containing *noted* weavers. Martin Byrom, or Brian, of Manchester, shared the reputation for skill with Hodgekins of Halifax, and Cuthbert of Kendal. In 1552 an Act was passed, regulating the length and breadth of Manchester *cottons* (then

Lancashire and Cheshire.

Summary to end of the 16th century.

woollen fabrics), rugs, and friezes. The manufactures of the same nature throughout Lancashire and Cheshire were further regulated by another Act passed in 1557. Bolton-le-Moors, with the neighbouring hamlets, was, after Manchester, the most important manufacturing place in Lancashire at this period.

West Riding of Yorkshire.

In the West Riding of Yorkshire, besides Bradford and Halifax (already noticed), Wakefield, Huddersfield, and Leeds were just embarking into the competition of the woollen trade.

Norfolk.

At Norwich, and throughout Norfolk, the trade was at the height of its prosperity.

Transfer of the staples abroad.

The great change which had taken place before the end of the 16th century in the distribution of the *staples*, as they were called, and the still greater change which was arising out of the commerce in elaborated articles instead of raw material, and in the consequent operations of the Merchant Adventurers, are also important circumstances. The Merchants of the Staple, originating about the middle of the 13th century, had been incorporated in 1319, and vested with a monopoly in the purchase of foreign merchandise and the sale of English produce, holding their market at Antwerp. These

privileges were much modified in 1328, when the commerce was thrown open; but in 1336 the restrictions on the export trade in wool were reimposed, and the staple thereof established in Brabant. In 1341 this staple was extended also to Bruges, the great mart of the Hanse Towns, and in 1348 to Calais. Calais continued to enjoy this privilege until 1588, when it was lost by England; but the market established at Bruges was transferred to the English cities above mentioned, and to Dublin, Cork, Waterford, and Drogheda, in Ireland. After the fall of Calais, the staple for wool (abrogated by prohibition of its exportation in 1622) and woollens was retransferred to Bruges. The confirmation of chartered privileges to the Merchant Adventurers in 1604 and 1617 was merely a circumstance illustrative of the practical change which had taken place in the direction of the trade.

Summary to end of the 16th century.

The exportation of cloth and wool was confined to English vessels, except under certain circumstances, so that not only were the markets for our commodities fixed, both at home and abroad—not only were the dealers in them specified—but the carrying trade was also reserved.

The amount and value of the export trade in woollens and wool up to this period (the

Amount and value of the export trade.

Close of the 16th century.

close of the 16th century) is involved in much doubt. It would seem as if the total number of cloths exported in 1551 was 45,000; but the average annual exportation at that period was certainly much greater, and the limited transactions of that year were the result of a combination of the native trading corporations (Merchants of the Staple and Merchant Adventurers) against the foreign merchants, called those of the Stillyard. For the latter alone, in 1511, exported 45,000 cloths; and within a very few years the exportation exceeded 100,000 cloths. Moreover, the wool-fleet which sailed to Antwerp alone in 1552 is spoken of as having numbered 60 sail; and in 1564 the total value of exports in wool and woollens, from England to the Low Countries, was estimated to have amounted to £750,000, of which upwards of £300,000 was for cloth. Add to this that, even during the wars with Spain, a contraband trade was still carried on with that country, that a traffic had been opened with Russia, Sweden, and the heart of Germany (by way of Hamburgh), and with Barbary, the Levant, and the Eastern Seas, and that, before the end of the 16th century, the Merchant Adventurers alone are credibly reported to have exported 60,000 white cloths,

worth £600,000, besides at least 40,000 coloured cloths and kerseys in great varieties, valued at £400,000, and it may fairly be inferred that the total value of woollens and wool exported at this period amounted to £1,500,000. Close of the 16th century.

The sacking of Antwerp in 1576, by which much valuable property belonging to English merchants was sacrificed; the interruption of intercourse with the Netherlands in 1564, and with Spain between 1569 and 1575; the subsequent renewal of hostilities with Spain; the decay of the Russian trade, particularly after 1583;—were so many adverse circumstances, some of which were, however, reacting favourably upon the manufacture of woollens. The sacking of Antwerp, for instance, had the effect of transferring the flourishing commerce of that city, as well as of the greater part of the Low Countries, for some time, to England. And, upon the whole, it is evident that the woollen trade of England had attained a remarkable pitch of prosperity. Vicissitudes of the trade, 1569—1583.

The exportation of the raw material had begun to dwindle very decidedly before the reign of Philip and Mary, not so much owing to the duties imposed upon the exported wool, as in consequence of the rapid extension of manufacture Gradual extinction of export of raw wool.

Close of the 16th century.

at home, whilst at the same time it was declining abroad.

The exportation was not yet permanently prohibited. We have already had occasion to mention the restrictions to which it was subjected from time to time. The decrease in this operation was an increase in the profitable labour of the population, promoted and favoured by the more advantageous circumstances presented in England than on the Continent.

Exportation of sheep forbidden, 1566.

The exportation of sheep was forbidden in 1566, by the Act 8 Eliz. c. 6, probably from the idea, which had obtained much credit, that the Cotswold sheep sent to Aragon in 1468 had so greatly contributed to improve the Spanish fleeces as to have seriously damaged the interests of the English producers. Perhaps also this law was dictated by a fear lest the French or Germans should succeed in excelling us by the same means. Anyhow, the extreme jealousy of the English wool-producers dates its ascendancy from this period.

Commencement of the worst period of disaster.

If, however, the woollen manufactures of this country were highly prosperous during the reign of Queen Elizabeth, independently of several adverse circumstances, some of which we have named, this prosperity was not founded upon

solid commercial principles, but contained in itself the elements of rapid decay. Every step which had been made in the progress to this condition had consisted in the constitution of gigantic monopolies, of which the tendency was to induce an artificially exalted market and a confliction of great interests, which might at any time prevent one section concerned from meeting the competition of foreign industry when occasion should arise, by holding it in subjection to another section not yet exposed to the action of such competition. The political state of the nation, equally artificial, was already quivering with the coming convulsion. The relations between the Crown and the People had assumed a condition which could only be rendered tolerable to such a nation by a strikingly national tendency of administration (an active representation of the national sentiments), or be sustained by a bold, self-reliant, and vigorous sovereign. The successors of Queen Elizabeth were destitute of both qualifications. Weak and presumptuous, they encouraged evil advisers who flattered their foibles. Bigoted by predisposition, they became the tools of bigots, and thus attacked the prosperity of the woollen manufactures, by striking at the very root of their

Close of the 16th century.

success, in revoking or modifying the absolute toleration which had secured the intelligence and skill of the French and Flemish immigrants (mostly extreme Protestants) to English commerce. Circumstances were reversed. The United Provinces had become independent and thriving, and promised the toleration and encouragement which the new dynasty of England denied. The tendency of French policy even was changed. It was still directed to establish an undisputed supremacy for the King, and a recognition of the doctrinal pretensions of the Church. But the glory of the sovereign was sought in the prosperity, wealth, unity, and splendour of the nation, and even the Jesuits were soon taught that the age of sheer fanaticism was past, and that for the purpose of encouraging the productive industry of the country, it would be necessary to let all unostentatious nonconformists *think* as they pleased, provided they *wrought* and *produced* well. Richelieu, in fact, was not the Duc de Guise. Louis XIV., until the latter part of his reign, was surrounded by advisers too wise to resume the principles of Catherine de Medici. Germany had become, to a great extent, settled and secure, and the forests of North America offered an asylum should all other retreats fail. To Hol-

Revival of the trade in the Netherlands and France.

land, to the colonies of North America, to Germany, and even to France, accordingly, were the ablest and most industrious weavers of Norfolk, Suffolk, and Essex soon scattered.

The reciprocal animosities which became inflamed by the contest between the King and Parliament resulted in the alternate emigration of men of all political opinions, whilst the ruinous desolation of a civil war and the utter insecurity of foreign commerce, quickly reduced manufacturing and trading operations almost to a standstill, and numbers of those engaged in these pursuits to ruin. The factories fell into decay, and a further stream of industrial emigration set out.

Exportation of wool forbidden, 1622, etc.

The British Government, from the outset mistaking the real causes of the calamities which were accumulating upon the manufactures, or acting under the impulse of sectional interests, had interposed a series of empirical remedies against the mischief. Amongst these measures were the Royal Proclamation of James I., in 1622, prohibiting the exportation of wool (which was repeated in 1630 and 1632 by Charles I., temporarily suspended in 1640, and revived in 1647), and the prohibition of the exportation of white (that is, undyed) cloth, which had hitherto comprised the great bulk of the manufactured

Exportation of white cloth forbidden, 1616.

exports. This latter measure was adopted in 1616. It was not perceived that the increased exportation of raw wool was, in fact, not the cause but the consequence of a decline in the manufacture itself, occasioned by other injudicious restraints, dictated by the spirit of monopoly, and which rendered those manufactures unequal to the competition offered by those of the Continent, in which they were reviving under less prejudicial circumstances. It was not observed that, instead of depriving the Continent of the materials for cloth-making, such a measure was stimulating the production of the raw material there, and discouraging it in England; and that, inasmuch as the raw material would be consumed where it could be wrought at the greatest profit, it would certainly have found a market at home, where it was free from the expenses of freight, duties, etc., if the combined monopolies of the trade had not heaped such cost upon it, when wrought up, as to render it dearer in that state to the foreign consumer than if wrought abroad after incurring all the expenses of freight, duties, etc.

Neither was it taken into account, whether at this period or subsequently, that the inevitable result of such a restriction, in so far as it was

really effective, would be to entail a deterioration upon British wool by furnishing a strong incentive to the sheep-farmer to seek in the carcase for a new source of emolument, to the neglect of the fleece, or to the increase of weight in the latter, regardless of the quality. And this is precisely what has occurred. High feeding has the effect of improving the flesh, and increasing the weight of the fleece (that is, of producing a more abundant crop), but it also greatly impairs the fineness and softness of the staple. High feeding was the obvious resource of the sheep-farmers, so soon as they had reason to apprehend exclusion from a fair market for their wool; and it became more profitable for them, not only on account of the flesh, but on account of a more than trebled crop of wool. Thus have we secured the finest mutton, at the expense of finer wool.

Effect of the prohibition upon sheep-farming.

It is not reasonable to urge that this effect does not properly descend to our own time from this cause, because the prohibition against the exportation of wool became a dead letter after the 17th century, on account of an extension of manufactures, which rendered us a consuming and importing nation. For not only had a decisively new impulse been given to the sheep-

farmers, but the confidence of this class was kept in abeyance by the bugbear of mischievous exportation, even in its chronic, but trivial contraband condition, which haunted the manufacturing imagination, and dictated a repeated revival of the prohibition, long after an exporting condition had ceased to exist so as materially to influence the market.

The very tenor of the enactments restraining the out-transport of wool, as well as their spirit, was calculated to keep alive a feeling of chilling distrust amongst the sheep-farmers. By the Act (13 and 14 Charles II. c. 18) passed in 1674, it was pronounced *felony* to export wool,—the first parliamentary prohibition having been enacted in 1672 (12 Charles II. c. 32);—and although this law was modified in 1697 (7 and 8 William III. c. 28), the prospect of a liberal policy was still completely excluded.

Exportation of wool a felony, 1674.

The prohibition against the exportation of white (or undyed) cloth, conceived in the same narrow spirit, and having for its object to monopolize the operation of dyeing for the home manufacturers, was more immediately and signally disastrous. The markets of the Low Countries and Germany were instantly closed against all British coloured fabrics; the exporta-

tion sank, almost at once, from upwards of 100,000 cloths in the year, to less than 30,000; and albeit the terms of this exclusion suggested an ingenious invention designed to evade them, and which has been of permanent service (namely, that of ingrained coloured cloths, or those wrought out of *dyed wool*), the exclusion remained as a grievous cause of injury. The disheartened and impoverished manufacturers fled for refuge amongst their continental rivals, and helped to swell the tide of prosperity which they had jealously attempted to thwart, and had thus done so much to promote.

Spanish wool in perfection —French improving.

Meanwhile, the fine wools of Spain had been restored to the degree of excellence which they had attained under the Roman rule, and had been raised, perhaps, by two centuries of care and attention, to still greater perfection. Continued efforts were made by the government of France to improve the wool produced in that country, whether by experiments upon the native sheep, or by the introduction of Spanish and other foreign breeds. In Germany, also, great efforts were being made to extend the production of available clothing wool.

Colbert, so distinguished for his clear-sighted and laborious attention to the domestic prospe-

Colbert's policy on the woollen trade.

rity of France, had endeavoured to import some of the best breeds of English sheep. In this he failed, owing to the jealous vigilance of the English. The number of ordinances which appear amongst the French records of this period (towards the close of the 17th century) afford abundant evidence of the assiduity with which the government watched over the progress of the woollen manufactures.

We have already intimated that this trade had existed, and even flourished, to some extent, in France long before. As early as the year 1511, it appears from a rescript of the Emperor Maximilian, imposing restrictions upon the importation of foreign merchandise into the territories of the House of Burgundy, that France, even at that time, exported cloths thither to the value of some 300,000 guilders, annually, whereas the value of English woollen cloths brought into those markets at the same period only amounted to 200,000 guilders, and the value of *Scottish* cloths to 100,000 guilders.

Rapid improvement of French manufacture in the 17th century.

But until the middle of the 17th century, the French woollen manufactures did not, upon the whole, molest the prosperity of the English. Their progress must have undergone serious vicissitudes, insomuch as France continued to be

a large customer for English woollens even until the adverse tariff of 1667. Indeed, there is every reason to believe, from the manner in which those circumstances affected the English woollen trade, that the persecution to which the Protestants were subjected during the latter part of the 16th century, almost arrested the operations of all French manufactures for the time.

In the days of Colbert, however, the state of England favoured the restoration and promotion of French woollens; and had that minister's more enlarged views of international trade not been discountenanced after his death, France might have continued to vie with England (perhaps even to excel her) in the other markets of the world.

The illicit exportation of wool from England received the utmost encouragement which high prices and free admission could afford it, and the French writers on this subject boast that their cloth-workers could always obtain sufficient supplies of wool from England, as well as from Scotland and Ireland.

There was also a regular importation from Spain, Portugal, Holland, Constantinople, Smyrna, Alexandria, Aleppo, Cyprus, the Morea, and Barbary. The best wools of the Levant were those of Constantinople and Smyrna.

The best Spanish (Castilian and Aragonese wools), from Segovia and Saragossa, were imported by way of Bilboa, subject to a small duty. These were divided into three classes, the first and finest of which was used for superfine cloth, the second for the cloth of Elbeuf, so called from that place, where it was chiefly made, the third for the coarser cloth of Rouen and Arnatal.

French wool inferior.

The French wool, generally speaking, was and is of inferior quality. It was chiefly produced in Languedoc, Berry, Normandy, Burgundy, Champagne, and Picardy. That of Valogne and the neighbourhood, in Lower Normandy, was the best, and was almost exclusively used in the manufacture of Valogne, Cherbourg, and Var cloth, and of the better sorts of St. Lo and Caen. That of Berry was next in quality, and was used, with the admixture of a little Spanish, in the cloth of Valogne and of Berry. The cloth manufactories of Poitou were chiefly employed in making the finer fabrics of pure Spanish wool. The wool of Champagne was all of ordinary quality, and was scarcely used for any but the coarsest fabrics for domestic use.

Tapestry trade in France.

Besides the manufacture of cloth, with the extension of woollen manufactures arose the trade (till then peculiar) in what were called tapestry-

wools, which acquired celebrity and importance from the beautiful Gobelin fabrics. These tapestry-wools were spun chiefly at Abbeville and Rogières (near Amiens), mostly dyed at Paris, and, to a considerable extent, exported to Germany and, by way of Lyons, to Savoy and Italy. Amongst the latter, three distinct qualities were reckoned. Gobelin tapestries.

With respect to the Gobelin tapestries, although they are so well known, we cannot pass them without some more particular notice. The magnificent designs wrought in this species of fabric which adorn the walls of Versailles, the Louvre, and others of the French palaces, conceived by Le Brun, and executed at the Royal Factory of the Gobelins in the Faubourg St. Marcel, are universally known and admired.

This factory was originally established principally for dyeing.

It was founded by Giles and John Gobelin, the most noted dyers of their time, who were particularly famous for having been the first to introduce into Paris their celebrated *scarlet.* They established their workshops on the banks of a little stream called the Bièvre (and since then the River of the Gobelins), close to Paris ; and these workshops continued to be called the Gobelin Folly

until the year 1667, when the whole was purchased by the King at the instance of Colbert, and converted into a royal factory for all kinds of artistic articles, still including the celebrated tapestry, and comprising also ebony work, goldsmithery, painting, sculpture, designing and modelling, etc., etc.

The immediate object of this step was to congregate all the art and talent of the world into one focus; to complete the decorations of the reconstructed Louvre and Tuileries; and to adorn Versailles with the most choice achievements of art.

The directorship of Le Brun has probably tended to perpetuate and adorn the reputation of this establishment. The tapestries were justly celebrated long before this, but they had never been applied to such masterly designs.

French fine cloths.

There can be no doubt but that the French fine cloths, no less than those of the Dutch and Germans, and perhaps rather more than they at this particular epoch, established themselves in dangerous rivalry against the English, and did a great deal of injury to the interests of the British cloth-workers. And it is a remarkable proof of the difference between the genius of persistent energy in the one nation, as compared

with the other, that immediately after a period of such severe trials and reverses, in the presence of such aspiring, wealthy, industrious, and opulent competitors as the Dutch, and notwithstanding the steady efforts of the French Government, combined with the superior taste and operative skill of the French people, the British woollen manufactures should have suddenly revived with such redoubled animation not only in England, but in Scotland and Ireland also, whilst those of France sunk into comparative insignificance.

True it is that external circumstances once more contributed to bring about this result; nevertheless, the results were apparently out of all comparison to these causes.

Progress of the trade in Scotland and Ireland.

It was during a period of the greatest uncertainty and distress in England that the woollen manufactures of Ireland, and probably of Scotland, were firmly established, although those of Scotland are mentioned long before. Early in the Civil War, a number of cloth-workers settled, and resumed their trade at Dublin, Cork, Kinsale, and Clonmel, and some French drugget manufacturers, who had previously sought a permanent establishment in England, founded factories at Waterford.

Spanish wool introduced about 1660.

The introduction of Spanish wool into this country became a decided feature in the trade only at the time of the Restoration, in 1660, just when the French fine cloths, made exclusively of that material, were in their highest repute. The object of the direct encouragement given to the use of Spanish wool was to enable the English cloth-workers to equal or excel the French in the production of superfine fabrics, and subsequently this result was achieved. But notwithstanding many artificial efforts to revive the prosperity of this trade at that period, the attempt failed, the distress went on increasing, and the trade, both domestic and foreign, was sinking to nothing.

Extinction of the export trade, 1665.

In 1665, the exportation of cloth had become merely nominal,—not more than a tenth of what it had been a century before,—and some 2000 or 3000 cloth-workers emigrated in a body to the Palatinate, where they established woollen manufactories. Nothing seemed to restore the British cloths to the position in the continental markets which they had secured before the ill-advised prohibition issued against the exportation of undyed cloth.

About the same time the French Government was receiving, protecting, and encouraging

one Van Robey, a Dutch Protestant, who settled and founded fine Spanish cloth factories at Abbeville.

The Plague also of 1665, and the Fire of London of 1666, respectively tended to exacerbate the condition of manufacturing depression in England, and, certainly, not without some ground for superstitious alarm, contributed to engender a great degree of despondency, so universal and increasing seemed the calamities of the country.

Period of the greatest depression, 1665—1668.

Between this period and that of the Revolution (1688), the unsettled state of the country, the lack of administrative talent, and the recklessness or bigotry of the Court conspired to arrest any tendency to revival, and these thirteen years may be mentioned as the time of the greatest depression which the woollen trade had suffered since the days of Edward III.

Perplexity as to remedies for the calamities of the trade.

The very profusion of attempted remedies is a proof of the sickly state of the trade. A prodigious number of causes were accused of occasioning this deplorable depression. In a remonstrance addressed to the Lords Commissioners for the Treaty of Commerce with France, in 1764, it is represented that the total exports of manufactured articles (*woollen* and *silk*) from hence to France in the year 1668-69 only amounted to a value of

£84,621 6*s.* 8*d.*, whereas the *linen* and *silk* fabrics imported hither from France, in the same year, amounted to a value of £807,250 4*s.*, besides some £300,000 for wines, brandies, etc., and the value of an incredible quantity of toys, rich apparel, point-lace, etc., etc. Between 1660 and 1680, the contraband exportation of wool, especially to France, is continually lamented as the great cause of the decay of English manufactures. Others complained bitterly that instead of manufacturing Spanish wools into fine cloths, the fine Dutch fabrics made of this material, especially Dutch blacks, were imported in large quantities for consumption into this country. And amongst other notable schemes devised for the revival of the cloth-working trade, was a regulation established by the Corporation of London, prohibiting all persons not free of the city from dealing in any way in the Blackwell Hall, Leaden Hall, or Welsh Hall, where the cloth-dealings were transacted. Amongst the foreign cloth manufactures of which the British monopolists had become jealous, we hear much of those of Silesia. It was averred in 1655 that Silesia annually produced some 220,000 cloths, and that the exportation of them to Brandenburg, and other parts of Germany, had totally displaced cloth of British manufacture. At

times, and especially in 1660, the Merchant Adventurers were blamed for the decay of the trade. At other times, even the East India Company incurred its share of the perplexed discontent of the weavers. It was alleged by the private merchants, or *Interlopers* as they were called, that from June 24 to September 29, 1661, the Merchant Adventurers had only bought and exported from Exeter 225 pieces in all, including serges, broad-cloths, kerseys, Devonshire dozens, and bays; and that the private merchants of Exeter had, during the same period, contrived to export and find a market for the same goods, in the same foreign markets, to the extent of 9254 pieces. Accordingly, in 1662, temporary license was granted to all persons to buy and ship woollen manufactures. In 1663, however, the clothiers themselves petitioned for the revocation of this license.

Value of the exports and imports to and from France, 1663.

In a pamphlet, published in 1663, "woollen cloths, woollen stuffs of all sorts, stockings, and ribandings," are named as the chief existing manufactures; and the large importation of French goods is again lamented as the cause of the deplorable depression of the home trade. As it is curious and interesting, from exhibiting the details of the entire trade between the two

nations at that period, we transcribe the enumeration as we find it:—

"Velvets plain and wrought, satins plain and wrought, cloth of gold and silver, armoysins, and other merchandises of silk, which are made at *Lions*, and are valued to be yearly worth	£150,000
In silks, stuffs, taffeties, poudesoys, etc.; tabbies, plain and wrought silk, ribbands, etc., made at Tours	300,000
In silk ribbands, gallowns, laces and buttons of silk, made at Paris, Rouen, etc.	150,000
A great quantity of serges made at Chalons, Chartres, Estamin, Rheims, Amiens, etc.	150,000
In bever, demicastor, and felt hats of Paris, etc.	120,000
In feathers, belts, girdles, hatbands, fans, hoods, masks, gilt and wrought looking-glasses, cabinets, watches, pictures, cases, medals, tablets, bracelets, and other such-like mercery wares, above	150,000
In perfumed and trimmed gloves	10,000
In all sorts of ironmonger wares	40,000
In linen cloth made in Brittany and Normandy	400,000
In pins, needles, box-combs, tortoiseshell-combs, etc.	20,000
In papers of all sorts, above	100,000
In household stuff, beds, bedding, etc.	100,000
In wines, above	600,000
In aqua-vitæ, cyder, vinegar, verjuice, etc.	100,000
In saffron, Castile soap, honey, almonds, prunes, etc.	150,000
Besides five or six hundred vessels of salt.	
Total, above	£2,540,000

"The commodities exported out of England into France, consisting chiefly of woollen cloths, serges, knit-stockings, lead, pewter, alum, and all else, do not amount to above £1,000,000."*

Prohibitory duties in France.

These unfavourable conditions were attributed, not without reason, to the exclusive policy of

* "England's Interest Considered," by Samuel Fortrey. London, 1663.

France, which, whilst it lavished rewards upon its own operatives, imposed an increasing rate of duties upon English-wrought commodities, until they became practically prohibitory. In 1632 a duty of 6 livres was imposed upon each piece of English broad-cloth. In 1644 this duty was raised to 9 livres, in 1654 to 30 livres, in 1664 to 40 livres, and in 1667 to 80 livres, when it practically closed the French ports against this article as well as against all serges, upon which duties had been progressively heaped in the like proportion. In 1678 (see the Act 29-30 Charles II. c. 1), a clause was inserted into the Act of Parliament then passed, prohibiting French commodities for three years, and the "Protectionists" loudly boast of this Act as the first cause of reviving prosperity for British manufactures. At the period at which the force of this clause was to have expired there was no session of Parliament, so that it continued active until repealed in 1685, under James II. (1 Jas. II. c. 6); and it was revived in 1689 in the Act 1 W. & M. c. 34, and in 1693 in the Act 4 and 5 W. & M. c. 25; whilst the Methuen Treaty with Portugal, in 1706, was a confirmation of the same line of policy.

Counter prohibition of French goods, 1678.

Repealed 1685, revived 1689 and 1693

Sir Josiah Child, writing in 1667, although

he harps upon the popular error that the illicit export of wool (*runnage*) was the great cause (instead of the effect) of the depression of manufactures, seems to have been partially alive to some of the most powerful causes of industrial decline.

Mischief of restrictions and monopolies.

He blames all the absurd restrictions imposed upon the establishment and locality of factories, the forced distribution of labour, the restriction upon looms, the laws rendering the use of certain materials, and the making of certain kinds of fabric, compulsory, notwithstanding changes in tastes and requirements; and he just dimly perceives the grievous mischief of the monopolies. As a picture of the past and surviving trade of Great Britain at that period, we transcribe his enumeration of the trades which have declined or been lost, and of those which continue:—

"Trades lost to this kingdom are—1. The Russia trade, where the Dutch had the foregoing year twenty-two sail of great ships, and the English but one. 2. The Greenland trade, where the Dutch and Hamburghers have yearly at least four or five hundred sail of ships, and the English but one the last year, and none the former. The great trade of salt, from St. Vuat's, in Portugal, and from France, with salt, wine, and brandy

to the eastlands. 4. All that vast trade of fishing for white herrings upon our coast. 5. The east country trade, in which we have not so much to do as we had formerly, and the Dutch ten times more than they had in times past. 6. A very great part of our trade for Spanish wools from Bilboa. 7. The East India trade for spices. 8. The trades of Scotland and Ireland are lost to the Dutch. The trade to Norway is in great part lost. 10. A very great part of the French trade, by reason of great impositions laid there upon our draperies. 11. A great part of the plate trade to Cadiz is lost to the Dutch. 12. The trade of Surianham also since the Dutch got possession of that country. 13. The trade to Menades. 14. The English trade to Guinea. Most of the forementioned are the greatest trades in the world for the employment of shipping and seamen."

"The trades we retain are—1. The fish trade of red herrings at Yarmouth, etc. 2. A good share of the Turkey, Italian, Spanish, and Portugal trades. 3. Our trades to and from our own plantations."

A few favourable circumstances.

As a set-off against the many calamities which pressed so heavily upon British industry during this disastrous period, we have but a few favour-

Godolphin Treaty with Spain, 1667.

able circumstances, of which one was the (Godolphin) Treaty of Commerce with Spain, in 1667, which it was hoped at the time would prove highly favourable to our clothiers. Another circumstance which attracted considerable attention at the time, and was thought of great importance, was the return and resettlement in England of an experienced clothier and dyer, called Brewer (a man of English extraction), who was accompanied by some fifty operatives, reputed amongst the most skilful of the Low Countries. It is to this Brewer and to his assistants that the greatest improvements in the dyeing of white cloths is attributed.

All material save sheep's wool for shrouds prohibited, 1679.

Amongst other measures devised for the purpose of giving an impulse to the revival of the woollen manufactures, was the curious expedient of prohibiting the use of any material for the shrouds of corpses save those wrought of sheep's wool. This law was passed in 1679.

Revocation of the Edict of Nantes.

Meanwhile, however, the genius of Colbert had given place to the bigotry of Tellier and the debauched enervation of Louis XIV.; and during the very interval when British woollen manufactures seemed to have suffered an incurable palsy, the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes (which had secured some degree of toleration to the Protestants, comprising the most industrious opera-

tives of France), extorted by a minister dying —the incarnation of bigotry—from a monarch emasculated by his vices, produced a panic which drove the most skilful spinners, dyers, and weavers once more to seek an asylum in England. Suddenly reduced from prosperity to comparative indigence, in a foreign country, these emigrants were compelled to apply themselves immediately to the pursuits with which they were familiar; and fortunately the Revolution, which took place soon afterwards, secured to them the protection and encouragement prompted by the new policy of the State. These emigrants included silk and linen, as well as woollen, manufacturers; and whilst the silk and linen manufactures, which had been founded in England a century earlier, upon the previous French immigration, were confirmed, improved, and extended—whilst Spitalfields became the seat of the important trade which since then has continued to flourish,—the woollen manufactures concentrating in the western counties, the West Riding of Yorkshire, and the south-west of Scotland, derived the additional advantage of the skill to be borrowed from the sister handicrafts.

Emigration of French weavers to England.

Thus, then, we have arrived at the third great epoch in the history of British woollens,

Third great epoch in the history of British woollens.

being that of the second great French immigration.

Dutch spirit of monopoly, and its results.

The rivalry of the Dutch was rendered less formidable by the Dutch themselves. With increasing prosperity, they had become more and more narrow in their principles of commerce. As phlegmatic, enduring, and plodding as the English in their character, they were less bold and enterprising. The system of monopoly which had so fatally destroyed the vitality of British manufactures, and incapacitated them from sustaining the shock of reviving competition from Germany, Holland, and France, now reacted with unintermitting effect upon Dutch industry, and deprived it of that buoyancy which alone could have enabled it to resist the reviving rivalry of British energy.

The temper of Dutch commercial principles, which rendered that shrewd and laborious nation unequal to the subsequent competition with British enterprise, when by its daring and energy it gradually, though slowly, forced the barriers of restriction and monopoly, was that so admirably and pithily expressed by Canning in his celebrated Despatch :—

> "In matters of commerce the fault of the Dutch,
> Is giving too little and asking too much."

This mania of monopoly which had characterized the operations of all the mercantile communities of modern Europe up to this time, and which continued until very recently to survive in our own commercial institutions, was differently seasoned in England and in Holland. The English character furnished a spice of daring in adventure (added to the shrewdness, solidity, and perseverance common to the Dutch also), which prompted British enterprise to deride the difficulties erected in its track, and to defy the precautions devised to limit its career.

Monopoly in England gradually retrenched.

Gradually whole piles of Acts of Parliament and charters came to be virtually disregarded, in so far as their most obnoxious provisions were concerned. Though unrepealed, or even unmodified, they fell into comparative desuetude, as it were, by common consent; until, finally, interests sufficiently powerful had been erected to erase them from the statute-book.

With some few exceptions, if new monopolies were called into existence, they obtained countenance only under the mask of very specious pretences, whereby it was sought to represent them as no monopolies.

Even powerful corporate bodies, like the East India Company, which commanded most of

the avenues to the Parliament and the Council Chamber, were compelled, after a severe but unavailing struggle, to part with one exclusive privilege after another, in order to obtain the renewal of the rest; and this, not because ministers were averse to India House patronage, or the House of Commons was easily shocked at chartered corruptions, but because the vigilance of the nation was awakening, and the keenness of its impulse to enterprise made itself so felt at St. Stephen's, that ministers were fain to confess they durst not wholly disregard the known will of the country at large.

Manchester Act, 1736.

The memorable "*Manchester Act*," as it was called, was passed in 1736 (9 Geo. II. c. 4), practically to annul the provisions of an Act passed only fifteen years before (1721), at the bidding of the woollen traders, to restrain the use of "*printed, painted, stained, and dyed calicoes*" (7 Geo. I. c. 7), because it was alleged that the use of such stuff was "*highly injurious*" to British woollens. To furnish their parliamentary accomplices with plausible pretences for the support of such a measure as this Act against calicoes, the clothiers had piled the table of the House of Commons with petitions, imploring protection for the distressed weavers since 1719.

Nevertheless, in a very few years this restriction became odious.

First stroke of liberal policy, 1715.

As early as 1715, we find Parliament taking what was then a very exceptional step in the right direction; it related to the woollen trade of Colchester. Regardless of the former right of those who had served their time to any branch of woollen manufacture in that place to establish themselves and pursue their calling there, the corporation, composed for the time being of baize-makers, made a bye-law in 1706, restricting the privilege of the trade to those who had served apprenticeship to their own particular branch. The Act of 1715 (1 and 2 Geo. I. c. 41) wholly set aside this bye-law, and restored the privilege of making any woollen stuff, to every person who would have possessed it before 1706.

That the provisions of this Act were but very moderately liberal is true. It is also true that there were many and grievous exceptions to this spirit of commercial emancipation—exceptions of which we will enumerate some particulars directly.

Nevertheless, it was the *tendency* to commercial emancipation, to which we have alluded, that constituted the chief difference between us

and the Dutch, and gradually exalted our trade out of theirs, as they had formerly erected theirs out of that of the Hanse Towns and Spain.

The jealousy of the Dutch, too, drove them to provoke disputes in which they were not strong enough to achieve a decisive success. They attempted to check the aspiring maritime and colonial pretensions of this country, by a series of petty vexations, which only served to expose them to periodical chastisement, and to progressive reduction of influence.

Rise, progress, and condition of the Dutch trade.

Here it may be useful, as well as interesting, to take a rapid survey of the rise, progress, and contemporaneous history of Dutch woollen manufactures, and of the commerce through which they were distributed.

The woollen manufactures of Holland proper are traced, first, to the immigration of clothiers, dyers, etc., from Flanders and Brabant, in the 14th century, in consequence of the troubles of the latter countries. Leyden was one of the first places where they settled and wrought. By 1487, the trade in wool and woollens was already considerably concentrated at Amsterdam, which rose in rivalry to Antwerp. Hardy, enduring, much engaged in fishery, the Hollanders numbered amongst them many good seamen. To-

wards the close of the 16th century, the furious persecutions suffered by the industrious classes in the Spanish Netherlands, drove numbers more of the most able manufacturers and operatives into Holland, which was rendered the most available asylum for them by the immunities which were extended to them, whilst jealous exclusiveness was prevalent in England and in the Hanse Towns, where *aliens* were not only subjected to double taxation, but were limited in the exercise of their industry to *trades already in existence.* The war between France and Spain, which broke out in 1634, drove many more of the manufacturers of Flanders and Brabant into Holland, and thus served to heighten the industrial prosperity of the Dutch. Meanwhile, the Dutch themselves had not been idle. They had taken advantage of the truce concluded with Spain in 1609, to extend their commerce by every means. Their commercial fleets swept the seas. In 1612 they concluded a commercial treaty with the Sultan, whereby they opened out the trade of the whole Mediterranean, and especially of the Levant, where, in exchange for cloth, they obtained raw silk, the beautiful wool of Persia, and that of Asia Minor. Soon afterwards they alone amongst all European nations, established

commercial relations with Japan, where they found a good market for their woollens.

Then came the peace with Spain by the treaty of Munster, which was greatly beneficial to Dutch trade.

Polish wool introduced by the Dutch, 1680.

In 1680, we find the Dutch ransacking the world for the raw material wherewithal to feed their woollen manufactures, and obtaining wool from Poland (which the French at that time also imported) for the manufacture of coarse cloths, druggets, and stuffs, for the markets of Spain, Portugal (with their colonies), and Germany; and deriving what they termed Sclavonian Wools, in small quantities, and of less value than the English, probably from Transylvania and Wallachia.

With France, their relations were not always on the most satisfactory footing; but the jealous exclusiveness of the French reacted rather upon themselves than upon the United Provinces. As early as 1659, the trade between these two countries was very considerable, and very advantageous to both. In that year the Dutch imported French goods to the value of 35,000,000 livres, of which no less a sum than 1,500,000 was for worsted spun in Picardy alone. In 1662, the Dutch concluded a reciprocal treaty

of commerce with France; but in 1667 all foreign commodities (Dutch included) were subjected to the exorbitant tariff aimed at the English, notwithstanding the treaty of 1662. The Dutch complained of this flagrant violation of engagements, but obtained no redress, and retorted by prohibiting French commodities. In 1672, war broke out between the two countries, and all commercial intercourse was stopped; but, in 1678, by virtue of the treaty of Nimeguen, the Dutch obtained an exceptional relaxation in their favour, and a return to the respective tariffs of 1662. The death of Colbert once more put an end to this mutually advantageous understanding, and the duties of 1667 were again imposed upon all Dutch goods imported into France; whereupon, the Dutch retorted by setting up manufactures on a large scale, of silk ribbands, laces, gold and silver brocades, hats, paper, and all other articles hitherto supplied to them by France. And from that time, the maritime trade in French manufactures sensibly declined, and the struggle continued between the Dutch and English, whose mercantile fleets brought them into constant and direct competition, and gradually tended to establish the supremacy of the latter.

At the close of the 17th century we may sum up the Dutch trade, in so far as it affected wool and woollens, as follows :—

Seats of manufacture in Holland.

Amsterdam, Leyden, and Haarlem were the most important markets for wool and woollen fabrics. At Leyden the best and finest serges, camlets, etc., were the principal articles made. At Haarlem, cloths, camlets, and all sorts of wool and hair stuffs were made in great perfection.

Whence the Dutch drew supplies of wool.

The Dutch imported wool from Spain and Portugal, England, Ireland, and Scotland (prohibitions notwithstanding), from all parts of Germany, from Pomerania, Poland, Silesia, the Levant, Persia, and South America.

Export trade of Holland.

To Spain they shipped drab stuffs, serges, fine and coarse camlets, and black *anacost* cloths, a great part of which were destined for the South American colonies. To Portugal they exported various kinds of woollens and silk fabrics. To Smyrna, for the Levant trade, and for the caravan transport to the interior of Asia, they shipped, chiefly, cloths, importing in exchange, raw and spun silks, twisted goats' and camels' hair, *coloured camlets*, and wool, amongst which was the beautiful Persian red wool (of Caramania), the most highly prized then known. To

the Italian ports (Venice excepted)—that is, to Genoa, Leghorn, Naples, and Messina—they exported cloths, serges, and camlets. To Venice they sent many varieties of woollens, but no cloth, as that was prohibited. To Surat they shipped many cloths destined for the court of the Moguls. To Bengal they sent cloth; to Tonquin, the same; and to Japan, cloth and *wool* (which the Japanese, it seems, also manufactured in some way).

To Russia, Norway, Denmark, and Sweden, the Dutch also exported many coarse, and some fine, woollen draperies, receiving in exchange metals, skins, some coarse wool, timber, and other goods. To Königsberg, in Prussia, they shipped cloth and other woollen fabrics, and the same to Poland, in large quantities. Through Hamburgh they supplied nearly the whole of Central Germany with one or other, or with several varieties, of their woollen fabrics (those parts excepted in which the manufacture was already established); by way of Emden and the Ems they obtained the woollen cloth of Paderborn and Munster; by way of the Weser they distributed woollens, in exchange for wool, through Lower Germany; by way of the Rhine and Moselle they poured their woollen fabrics

into all the towns lying near these streams, collecting raw material in exchange; at Frankfort there were two fairs every year, where Dutch commodities were those most plentifully furnished; by way of the Meuse, the serges of Leyden found their way to Liege, and the varied fabrics of Haarlem to Aix-la-Chapelle.

Prices of wool in Holland, 1719.

In 1719, the average prices of the various qualities of wool most used in Holland are authentically stated to have been as follow:—North German wool, from 10*d.* to 11*d.* (British sterling) the Dutch pound-weight; for Lünenburg and Bremen wool, 7*d.*; Polish summer clip, 11*d.* to 1*s.*; Caramanian red wool (Persian), from 2*s.* 7*d.* to 4*s.* 2*d.*; best Spanish, 3*s.* 10*d.*; Portuguese, 2*s.* 6*d.*

British woollens since the Revolution of 1688.

After the Revolution, the history of British woollen manufactures is one of steadily increasing prosperity and opulence. Even during the reign of William III. the trade had not only recovered the ascendancy and importance acquired a century before, and since well-nigh extinguished, but had surpassed its greatest former success. At the close of the 17th century, a very reliable estimate fixes the annual value of woollen manufactures in Great Britain at nearly £10,000,000; of which goods to the value of nearly £3,000,000 were annually ex-

ported. King and Davenant thus divided the wealth of England at that time :— Value of the manufacture and export trade.

Annual income of England . . .	£43,000,000
Yearly rent of land	10,000,000
Value of wool yearly shorn . . .	2,000,000
Value of woollen manufacture made here .	8,000,000
Value of woollen manufacture exported .	2,000,000

But in the "British Merchant" for 1699, the value of woollen goods exported in that year is stated at £2,932,292 17*s.* 6*d.*

The vicissitudes experienced by the woollen trade during the 18th century were few and, upon the whole, unimportant. The extent and quality of the manufactures, the variety of the fabrics, the skill of the operatives, the inventive application of the master clothiers, and the exportation of woollen manufactured goods—now once more the great staple commodity of British industry—went on continually increasing. The untoward aspect of external affairs upon the breaking out of the American War of Independence, and from that time until after its close, no doubt checked the exportation of woollen fabrics ; yet there is nothing in the recorded condition of the trade to show that any retrogression, or even any serious depression, ensued even during that calamitous period.

In fact, it was just when our commerce was threatened by the debilitated condition of our navy, the loss of our principal colonies, and afterwards by a general maritime combination against us, that those decisive changes were being carried out in the mechanical departments of yarn and cloth manufacture, which formed the fourth great epoch in the history of our manufactures in general, and of our woollen manufactures in particular.

Yet, as we have already intimated, the revival and steady advance of the woollen trade after the Revolution, was neither characterized nor accompanied by very many or very striking applications in practice of those more enlightened views respecting the true principles and interests of trade which were beginning to acquire currency.

Prohibitions against exporting wool repeated.

The prohibition against the exportation of wool was renewed by stringent enactments as occasion seemed to call for the security of new provisions. Such was the Act in 1688; in which, however, exceptions were made as regarded limited quantities of wool to be shipped only at Southampton for Jersey, Guernsey, Alderney, and Sark. Such, also, was the Act of 1695; in which it was additionally provided,

that wool might be exported from *Ireland*, but only to Whitehaven, Liverpool, Chester, Bristol, Bridgewater, Minehead, Barnstaple, and Biddiford. Cruisers were by this Act directed to watch between the North Foreland and the Isle of Wight, to intercept any running of wools across Channel. Such, also, was the Act of 1697, which forbade the exportation of wool and fuller's-earth, even to Ireland. Another Act, passed in 1695, avowedly for the encouragement of linen manufactures in Ireland, was preparatory to the atrocious law enacted in 1698 and confirmed in 1700, prohibiting the exportation of woollen fabrics from Ireland.

Enactments fatal to woollen manufactures in Ireland, 1698-1700.

It was estimated that Ireland then contained some 50,000 people, mostly English immigrants or their descendants, who depended upon the woollen trade—they being clothiers, weavers, dyers, worsted-combers, and hatters.

Even as early as 1672, that is, before any favourable reaction had taken place in the English manufactures, the wool exported from Ireland—by far the greater part of which was sent to England and Scotland—was estimated to have amounted to 2,000,000 lbs.; and that retained for the consumption of the Irish factories was calculated at 6,000,000 lbs.; the

Period 1698—1744.

total number of sheep being estimated at 4,000,000.

Consequent decrease of the supply of wool from Ireland.

The enactments of 1698 and 1700 were, as may be supposed, fatal to Irish woollen manufactures, and produced for some years what was esteemed as a desirable reaction in favour of the English manufacturers, both by lowering the price of raw wool and by liberating an increased supply of material for the use of the English clothiers. Thus, the price of good English wool, which had ranged but little below 28*s.* a tod of 28 lbs. in 1694-5-6, sunk almost unintermittedly to between 16*s.* and 14*s.*, which was the current rate between 1736 and 1743; the exception being a temporary reaction in 1717 and 1718. And as regards the supply of raw material obtained by the English clothiers (besides the very considerable quantity smuggled into France), we find from the official records, that from 1700 to 1728 the annual importations from Ireland into England amounted to 4,086,000 lbs.; in 1723 the quantity was 4,883,238 lbs. But the ultimate result of so selfish and short-sighted a policy was evidently as disastrous to the Irish sheep-farmers as it had previously been to the weavers, etc., and thus eventually recoiled, with

merited disadvantage, upon the English clothiers, since the average annual importation of wool from Ireland into England between 1725 and 1730 had sunk to 2,430,000 lbs.; and though in 1741 it still amounted to 2,604,600 lbs., in 1744 it had dwindled to 1,869,102 lbs.

In the like narrow and mischievous spirit were conceived the innumerable laws and regulations which continued to be directed against the great bugbear of wool exportation. In 1716, we find an Act of Parliament and an Order in Council on that subject. In 1719 the penalty of *transportation* for seven years, under certain circumstances, was assigned to the *crime* of *running wool* (4 Geo. I. c. 2). In 1718 an Act was passed intended to restrain coasting vessels from running wool. On the 19th of May, 1720, the exporters of wool, woolfels, fuller's-earth, etc., had a Royal Proclamation hurled at their heads.

Transportation the penalty of *running* wool, 1716—1719.

Of a similar character were a heap of other restrictive enactments passed from time to time, and whereby it was forbidden to export not only wool, but coverlids, which could be reduced to wool again, or beds stuffed with wool, etc. (12 Geo. II. c. 21). Every precaution was adopted to watch even the coasting trade, lest a single pack of wool should happen to escape

Preventive precautions along the coast.

to France or the Low Countries, under pretence of being intended for some other British port.

All these measures ineffectual.

Nevertheless, it is admitted on all hands that every precaution failed in preventing the illicit exportation from going on; a circumstance illustrative at once of that peculiar bent of national energy to which we have already attributed much of our superiority to the Dutch, and of the utter stupidity of laws which offer a premium to their own violation.

Smuggling of wool out of Ireland, 1700-1708.

Not only from the south and south-east coast of England was this practice carried on in defiance of the cruisers, but also, and to a still greater extent, between Wexford, Waterford, Youghal, Kinsale, etc.; and the ports of Nantes, St. Malo, Rochelle, and Bordeaux. It was the habit of the Irish smugglers of wool to pack it in beef barrels; and there are authentic proofs that, between 1700 and 1708 alone, a fleet of more than thirty vessels was actively and incessantly engaged in this traffic.

Smuggling from the south and south-east coast.

As, in 1670, Canterbury and Dover continued to be represented as villanous dens infested with atrocious smugglers, the bold shore of Kingsdown was then, as since, a favourite place of embarkation and debarkation. The shoals and tortuous channels which embarrassed

the mouth of the Stour, and covered the approaches to the Sandhills and Sandwich, and the shaded glades of the New Forest, affording ready means of concealment on the shores of Southampton Water, were peculiarly favourable to contraband trade. And all these facilities were enhanced by the fogs and storms of the whole coast, which, whilst they served to cover the operations of the smugglers, interrupted the vigilance of the cruisers, by creating dangers which could be lightly regarded only by the experienced, bold, and skilful smuggling seamen, prompted by the incentive of large and rapid gains. These gains were double. The French and Dutch bid high for wool; the enormous duties levied upon French and Dutch liquors, in England, left a large margin for illicit importation, and those commodities found a ready sale in this country. Regardless, therefore, both of the dangers of the coast, and of the penalties imposed upon them, the smugglers went on smuggling. The French bought the wool, and wondered. The smugglers smiled, drank, and sold brandy freely. Public morality and revenue suffered. The clothiers continued to growl; Parliament and the Council issued more decrees; and the world wagged on.

Restrictive laws regulating the manufacture of woollens, 1720—1726.

Besides the restrictions imposed upon the exportation of raw wool, there were also other measures adopted during the same period, and hardly less indicative of the manner in which monopoly still struggled to retain its hold. Such was the Act of 1720 (amended and explained by that of 1724), for preventing frauds in the making of serges, plaidings, and fingrums, and for regulating the manufacture of stockings in Scotland. Such, also, were the Acts of 1725 and 1726, for regulating the manufacture of woollens in Yorkshire, and for preventing the combination of workmen engaged in that trade.

Methuen Treaty, 1703, and its effect.

In 1703 was concluded the commercial treaty with Portugal, known as the Methuen Treaty, by virtue of which, upon granting a special degree of encouragement to Portuguese wines, we secured for our woollens admission at duties which left them in command of the market.

Portuguese woollens.

The history of Portuguese woollen manufactures, in so far as they affected external commerce, had been very "brief," but we cannot add very "bright," or very "glorious." There had from time immemorial been, as we have already stated, a rough kind of woollen manufacture

for the supply of the coarse stuffs in common use. It was not, however, at this, but at an improved and extended manufacture, dating from about 1681, that the treaty of 1703 was levelled. In that year, one Courteen, an Irishman, who had been in the household of Catherine of Braganza, emigrated to Portugal, together with some baize-makers, and manufactories of that article were quickly set up at Porto Alegre and Covilha, where they soon attracted attention.

Auspices of Portuguese manufacture.

Portugal, like Spain, produced good wool. That of Spain (the best in Europe at that period) was easy of access; but it was soon found that this wool was too short and too good for baize-making, and cloth manufacture was accordingly set up in its stead. Conducted by experienced workmen from England, this cloth-making quickly attained a high degree of perfection, insomuch that in 1684 the importation of foreign *cloth* was prohibited after 1685. The English merchants endeavoured to evade this prohibition by shipping *cloth serges* and *cloth druggets* to Portugal; but in 1686 these also were excluded.

Portugal secures the whole trade with Brazil.

By this time the Portuguese clothiers were sufficiently advanced to monopolize the whole supply required by Brazil; and as that country, as well as the Spanish South American colonies,

Results of the Methuen Treaty thereon.

formerly took off a considerable quantity of British woollen goods, the loss sustained by the success of Portuguese manufacture was bitterly complained of by the English clothiers. Thus, however, matters continued until 1703, when the dependence of the House of Braganza upon British support, combined with the selfishness of the vineyard proprietors, extorted from the Portuguese Government the well-known Methuen Treaty. This convention, acting upon the spiritless temper of the Portuguese, was fatal to their woollen manufactures, insomuch that the English woollens were soon restored to a complete command of the market; and by 1713, the exports of those commodities from hence to Portugal amounted in value to £600,000 during the year.

Union of Scotland, and its effects.

It was at this period that the union of Scotland with England into one realm was effected, and that the jealousies existing between the manufacturers and wool-staplers of the two countries were brought to an end by the uniformity of the restrictive policy thenceforward extended over the whole of Great Britain. Whereas, previously, and even as late as the year 1704, considerable quantities of English, Irish, and Scotch wool had been exported, principally to Holland; for notwithstanding the Acts

of the foregoing reign, which forbade the exportation of wool from Ireland even to Scotland, a large quantity of Irish wool found its way to the western coast of Scotland; and the Scottish Parliament of 1704 had rather encouraged than opposed the exportation.

This circumstance is the more noteworthy that it was under this system of indulgence respecting the raw material that the Scottish woollen manufactures made decisive and rapid progress, at the period when those of England, hitherto flourishing, were barely able to maintain themselves. Not that this was the origin of woollen manufactures in Scotland, as we have already had occasion to state, in speaking of the French trade (at pp. 83, etc.). Scottish *cloth* is mentioned as a considerable article of export, as early as the year 1511. And besides this, it is well known that home-spinning, knitting, and even weaving, for domestic use, were everywhere practised at obscurely remote dates, and that *plaids*—a species of woollen fabric till then peculiar to Scotland—had been made for the use of the population long before the time of which we are now speaking.

It does not, however, appear that the woollen manufactures of Scotland were either so much

multiplied, diversified, or extended, or contributed so largely to the external commerce of the country, until about the time of the Union.

But in the beginning of the 18th century we find the Scottish woollen manufactures already advanced to a considerable degree of prosperity and importance.

Seats and condition of Scottish woollen manufactures, 1705.

In 1705, wool spinning and stocking weaving are mentioned as employing many hands at Aberdeen; and amongst the woollen manufactures of Scotland generally are mentioned "broadcloth, fingrines, serges, bays, crapes, temmin, Glasgow plaids, all sorts of fine worsted camlets, together with other stuffs, and coarse (felted) hats." The worsted camlets of Hamilton and Glasgow in particular are quoted "as very near those stuffs in England; for what they want in the fineness of the wool they are finer in the thread" (better spun?), and "well wrought" (woven?). It is, however, to be remarked that up to this period the Scottish manufacturers had not paid sufficient attention to the proper sorting of the wool, for it was a matter of complaint against Scotch fabrics, that the *hairy* parts of the fleece were so mixed up in the working, that they damaged the finer fibre in the stuffs. Not improbably they were ill

felted, for the finish is sadly impugned. It was also a matter of complaint that they were ill dyed and dressed, and that the colours produced were deficient of that gloss and brilliancy characteristic of the finer French fabrics of the time, and of the then pre-eminent broadcloth of Somersetshire, Worcestershire, and Gloucestershire.

Quality and prices of Scottish woollens.

Aberdeen woollen stockings were made at from 10*d.* to 30*d.* a pair, and the best Scottish broadcloths commanded 12*s.* a yard, which was not much below the current price for English fabrics. So that there must have been some superior broadcloths made in Scotland, all the complaints against them notwithstanding.

It is further worthy of some notice that, according to official records, *Scottish* cloths to the value of 100,000 guilders annually were imported into the dominions of the House of Burgundy as early as 1511. It is a question whether the term *Scottish* was merely a nomenclature, or indicated the real origin of the fabrics. —Scotch authorities are wanting.

Circumstances affecting the British trade.

Whilst these extensions were being achieved by the manufactures of Great Britain, the markets in which they had to seek for a profitable market were more or less affected by a variety

of circumstances, besides those which have been already mentioned, amongst the most important of which was the contemporaneous condition of French commerce.

The establishment of woollen manufactories in various foreign countries, and in our own colonies, the extension of our establishments in the East Indies, our relations with some other states, and chiefly with Spain, and some few domestic events, are all entitled to some consideration.

Manufactures of Poland and Silesia.

Of these, we would notice the least important first; and such were the coarse woollen fabrics now made in Eastern Europe. In Poland, as well as in Silesia, as early as in 1648, manufactories had been established by Dutch and other weavers invited thither for that purpose.

Of Mexico.

Early in the 18th century woollen manufactories had been established in Mexico—principally at Puebla—where cloth was made which vied with the finest Spanish in quality, and that almost entirely out of Mexican and Guatemala wool.

Of the North American colonies.

About the same time, that is, in 1715, we find that numerous manufactories of the rougher kinds of woollens had been established in the British North American colonies, a circumstance which was, in a great degree, attributed to the

uncertainty and costliness of supplies obtained from the mother country during the European wars of that period. In New England, various woollen stuffs, kerseys, linsey-woolseys, and flannels were made.

In Maryland some linens and woollens were made at all events by 1746. Woollen and linen cloths were also made in the provinces of New York, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Pennsylvania, and druggets in Carolina.

If, however, these colonial manufactures at any time materially affected the prosperity of British industry, it is quite clear that they have not continued to do so since the War of Independence. Even the interruption of our mutual commerce, occasioned by that struggle, was productive of a prejudice to our woollen trade which was very slight, when compared with the prodigious advantages which that branch of industry derived from our subsequent intercourse with the United States. Probably the woollen manufactures of North America were exotic, and little calculated to maintain themselves under circumstances of commerce less hampered by foolish prejudices. Wool is not abundant, although it is said that there is, or was, a native breed of sheep, having spare fleeces of the finest quality.

Certain it is that the United States became our best and most constant customers for woollen fabrics.

Relations with Spain, and their effects.

As regards the relations existing between this country and Spain, in so far as they affected the prosperity of our woollen manufactures, the latter country was too much under the influence of France for our intercourse to be on the most advantageous footing; although, as for Spain, in its own proper national capacity, it was so rapidly sinking in the scale of world-wide influence, as to render its councils and its stupid, exclusive policy of comparatively less and less importance from year to year. The terms

The Treaty of Utrecht, 1712.

of the Godolphin Treaty of 1667 were yet in force when the intercourse between Spain and England was interrupted by that conflict, or series of conflicts, which terminated in the Treaty of Utrecht, in 1712. By the treaty of 1667, the duties imposed upon English merchandise were fixed at 11½ per cent. in Andalusia, 5 per cent. in Valencia, and 7 per cent. in Catalonia—terms which were, or naturally seemed to be, highly favourable at that period, when France was saddling the same commodities with duties amounting to at least 50 per cent.

By the explanatory articles appended to the

Treaty of Utrecht, however, the duties imposed upon British merchandise in Andalusia were raised to 27⅓ per cent. An universal outcry was, consequently, raised in England by all those directly or indirectly interested in the staple trade of woollens, both against the treaty, and against the Earl of Oxford, as the minister by whom it had been negotiated. Loud were the complaints of the British merchants at Cadiz, and so weighty was the matter conceived to be, that upon the accession of George I., one of the first considerations submitted to Parliament was the desirableness of negotiating new terms.

Increased duties in Spain upon British goods.

That the explanatory articles appended to the Treaty of Utrecht, as regarded the importation of British woollens into Spanish territories, were highly disadvantageous, is true enough. It is, moreover, evident, from the very facts adduced by the apologists of that instrument, that the result upon this branch of our exports was anything but satisfactory, bearing in mind the encouragement which trade in all departments (especially the export trade in manufactured articles) might have fairly been expected to derive from a general peace after an exhausting war.

Subjoined are the average quantities of woollen fabrics exported from, and of Spanish raw wool

Returns of the trade in 1709—1714.

imported into, England, in the three years before the peace (1709-10-11), and in the three years after the peace—under the influence of the explanatory articles above named—(in 1712-13-14), respectively, viz. :—

	In 1709-10-11.	In 1712-13-14.
Bays . . . . . exported	127,493 pieces.	158,904 pieces.
Cloth, all sorts . „	107,888 „	152,642 „
Cottons . . . „	273,017 „	525,227 „
Kerseys . . . „	59,885 „	83,110 „
Perpets and Serges „	8,250,805 lbs.	8,643,505 lbs.
Flannel . . . „	990,451 yards.	1,213,949 yards.
Stockings . . . „	81,472 doz. pairs.	96,939 doz. pairs.
Stuffs . . . . „	3,186,031 lbs.	5,586,968 lbs.
Says . . . . „	495,457 „	619,262 „
Northern dozens . „	19,385 „	52,151 „
Hats . . . . „	25,383 doz.	29,373 doz.
Spanish wool imported . .	13,986 bags.	20,388 bags.

New Spanish treaty, 1715.

In 1715, the negotiations above mentioned had already been completed, and a commercial treaty had been concluded with Spain, reinstating the conditions and duties fixed by the Godolphin Treaty in 1667. In 1718 the relations founded upon this treaty were again interrupted by a war, in no small degree occasioned by the wilful neglect or violation of its conditions on the part of Spain, secretly, if not openly, instigated thereto by France.

Interrupted, 1718.

New Spanish treaty, 1721.

In 1720, peace was once more restored, and in 1721 a new commercial treaty was concluded

between Great Britain and Spain, upon the basis of those of 1667 and 1715.

Amongst the circumstances of minor importance (besides those already noticed), it is now proper to mention some other seats of the woollen trade which had been exalted into notice, or had attracted attention, partly owing to the activity of the principal manufacturers and partly owing to their commercial rivalries, during the latter part of the 17th, and the beginning of the 18th centuries.

Woollens of Persia, Russia, Bohemia, Prussia, etc.

From Persia some very elegant worsted druggets were obtained. In Russia coarse woollens were made for domestic consumption from inferior native wool; in Sweden the same. In Bohemia the woollen and linen manufactures were rising to some degree of consequence, particularly the former, well supplied as they were from the abundant native flocks which furnished a surplus of raw material for exportation chiefly into Holland. In Prussia woollen manufactures had been established to a very considerable extent. In Transylvania fine cloth was made. At Dillenburg various woollen stuffs were made, and the trade was thriving. At Zurich, in Switzerland, woollen crapes were made; and at Venice the manufacture of superfine cloth, and of other

woollen stuffs, continued to be carried on with great success; whilst Hesse furnished the best of German wools, Parma the best of Italian, and the Veronese the most abundant; and the fleeces of Hungary and Styria found their way either to Transylvania or to Vienna, but mostly to the latter.

Condition of the French trade under extreme protection.

Now, however, we come to consider those contemporary manufactures which continued most to irritate the jealousy and to alarm the susceptibility of the British clothiers, dyers, and all their associated capitalists and operatives. These were the woollen manufactures of France. Weary of abusing the Dutch, the British woollen traders concentrated all their spleen upon the French, oddly enough, when the policy of the latter, and of which the English traders complained, was telling with fatal effect upon themselves, and doing more to secure a supremacy to the British woollen trade than the latter's own efforts could have otherwise hoped to achieve.

Though out of place in point of date, it is worthy of remark here, that when a man of the greatest genius ruled the destinies of France—that man being Napoleon I.—his so-called "continental system," which was an attempted generalization of the like policy, in

like manner recoiled with signal disaster both upon himself and upon his country.

Distribution of the French trade.

At the time of which we are speaking (between the latter end of the 17th, and the middle of the 18th centuries), woollen manufactures occupied the most extended sphere of operations which they ever attained (*cæteris paribus*). The trade, whether for raw material or for fabrics, was largely distributed over the greater part of France. Picardy was celebrated for its manufacture of fine linen and of woollen cloths and worsteds; Meaux was a market for the raw wool; Chalons contained considerable cloth factories; Champagne produced wool and coarse woollens, as well as some worsteds. In Provence, cloths and serges were largely made; in Languedoc, cloth, besides various other woollen goods, was manufactured. At Toulouse, Alet, and Castres, there were extensive manufactories of serges, bays, etc.; at St. Pons, of various woollen draperies. At Carcassonne, various woollens, and at Lodeve fine druggets were made. Montpellier was an active rallying point for the trade, both in the raw material of the Levant, and the manufactures of the south and south-west. At Nismes, the manufacture was carried on in great variety. At Gevaudan, serges

and other woollen draperies were made; and at Alais, druggets and serges. The beautiful province of Roussillon was celebrated for the fine wools produced upon the rugged but sunny steeps of the Pyrenees, and yielded a few woollen fabrics also. At Rochelle, some stuffs and serges were made; at Poictiers, worsted stockings; at Parthenay, druggets; and at Niort, woollen draperies in great variety. Maine contributed its serges and stuffs; Orleans its woollen stuffs and worsted stockings; Blois, its serges and stuffs; Lyons its fine and coarse woollen cloth; and Auvergne its serges, and other light fabrics. At Romorantin, Aubusson, and Telletin, considerable quantities and varieties of woollen draperies were made. In Touraine, which had been celebrated for its cloth manufactories during the latter part of the 17th century, the trade was already confined to Amboise. Anjou contributed its various slight woollen stuffs.

Yet, withal, were these promising enterprises languishing under the influence of that so-called "protection," by which it was expected to have fostered and encouraged them. The blow intended to be dealt to British industry had recoiled with terrible effect upon France. Instead

of extinguishing the British woollen trade, the exclusion of its products had only served to put a stop to the immense traffic in other manufactures, till then exclusively French, which the English (like the Dutch) quickly established at home, and with which they contrived to supply, not only their own wants, but the requirements of other markets also.

Effects of the French prohibitory duties upon British trade.

The prohibition of French merchandise in 1678, consequent upon the French tariff of 1667, was estimated to have resulted in promoting new branches of manufacture in England (exclusive of paper, hats, and some minor articles) in the following proportions, viz. :—

Instead of	Brandy, native malt spirit, annual value . .	£60,000
„	Linen, Irish, ditto	80,000
„	Ditto, Cheshire and Lancashire, ditto . . .	240,000
„	Ditto, Dorset and Somersetshire, ditto . .	100,000
„	Silks, English black, ditto	300,000
„	Ditto, ditto, linings	150,000
„	Ditto, ditto, handkerchiefs	200,000
	Annual Total . . .	£1,130,000

That the restrictive policy of France, of which the English cloth-workers so bitterly complained, did not really injure British commerce to the extent which their imaginations represented to them, is evident from the following facts, viz. :—

That in 1662 (before the severe French tariff of 1667), the total value of British merchandise exported to the whole world only amounted to £2,022,812; in 1669 (two years after the odious tariff had become in force), it amounted to £2,063,244; in 1699, to £6,788,166; and in 1703, to £6,644,103.

Plague at Marseilles, 1720.

To return once more to the minor incidents which exercised some share of influence upon British woollen manufactures, it would be improper not to notice amongst these the plague which afflicted Marseilles in 1720; because such a calamity, assailing the most prosperous commercial port of France, and one in which so large a proportion of its woollen trade was centred, could not but affect English commerce more or less. In fact, it will be readily discerned from the subjoined table, showing the annual value of British woollens exported from this country for a series of years before and after the date in question, that there was some increase in 1720, and the ensuing years, as compared with the preceding :—

Return of British woollens exported, 1718—1724.

TABLE OF THE ANNUAL VALUE OF BRITISH WOOLLENS EXPORTED.

1718	£2,673,696	1722	£3,384,842
1719	2,730,297	1723	2,920,601
1720	3,059,049	1724	3,068,373
1721	2,903,310		

In 1738 there were great complaints of distress amongst the cloth-weavers, especially those of Wiltshire and the Western Counties. A very serious riot of the operatives, which resulted in the demolition of some factories, broke out in Wilts. Yet there is no evidence that the trade generally was depressed. On the contrary—unless there were any particular circumstance peculiarly unpropitious to the manufacture of broadcloth, which could not, however, counterbalance the prosperity of other branches of the trade—if one could judge from the export returns, woollen manufactures in England had never been so prosperous, and were long before they again reached so high a pitch of activity; witness (as compared with the foregoing) the subjoined table, showing the annual value of British woollen manufactures exported for a series of years :—

Local distress. Riots in Wilts.

Prosperity shown by the annual value of exports.

In 1738	£4,158,643	In 1741	£3,669,734
„ 1739	3,218,273	„ 1742	3,358,787
„ 1740	3,056,720	„ 1743	3,541,558

Annual average value during six years ending in 1790, £3,544,160.

The annual average value for the ensuing five years (1790—1794, both inclusive) amounted to £4,880,759, and that of the next ensuing five years (1795—1799, both inclusive) amounted to £5,899,330; but the particularization of the operations then carried on belongs more properly

to the next period in the history of British woollens.

Before proceeding with that section of the subject, we think it will be useful, and not uninteresting to some of our readers, to quote the fluctuations which had occurred in the price of wool up to this time; the statement being founded upon the reduction of all the moneys cited, uniformly, to their respective equivalents in coin at the latter end of the 18th century.

Prices of raw wool at various times.

Assuming this rate, the price of one tod (28lbs.) of wool in 1198 was 15*s.*; in 1339, 21*s.* to 35*s.*; in 1353, 30*s.* In 1390, owing to the enactment restricting the markets, dealings, and transport from place to place, the price declined to between 8*s.* and 14*s.* In 1425, it was between 15*s.* 6*d.* and 19*s.* 6*d.*; in 1533, 13*s.* 4*d.*; in 1581, 21*s.*; in 1622, 18*s.*; in 1641, 24*s.*; in 1647, 38*s.*; in 1648, 40*s.*; in 1651, 28*s.* Between 1651 and 1660, the price rose as high as 60*s.*; but in 1660 it declined again to between 37*s.* and 42*s.* In 1670, it was 28*s.*; in 1677, between 13*s.* and 15*s.*; in 1694-5-6, 28*s.*; in 1698, 21*s.* In 1706, the price in England was 17*s.* 6*d.*; and in Scotland, 30*s.* to 33*s.* 6*d.* In 1707, it declined to 16*s.* 6*d.*; and in 1712 to 15*s.* In 1713 and 1714, it was 18*s.*; in 1717 and 1718, between 23*s.* and 27*s.*

From 1737 to 1742, the price again declined to between 11*s.* and 14*s.* In 1743, it was between 19*s.* 6*d.* and 21*s.*; in 1744, 17*s.*; and in 1745, 16*s.* Fourth great epoch in the woollen trade. —Machinery.

In the meanwhile the manufacture was proceeding, through a series of measures of greater or less importance, as affecting the profit derivable from the various branches of the woollen trade and the prosperity of the large class engaged in it, towards those essential changes in the rapidity and economy of manipulation which were destined to perfect the workmanship. These changes related chiefly to the modes of spinning the staple and weaving the yarns into cloth or other fabrics. The other processes were not so susceptible of great amelioration.

Until the close of the 18th century, all weaving looms, whether for wool, silk, cotton, or linen, were wrought by hand. A project had been set on foot in France, as early as the middle of the 17th century, for the application of some motive power to the spinning and weaving of linen thread; but this project does not seem to have been carried out in practice. Spinning was also an operation rendered somewhat tedious and precarious by the rude piece of machinery employed for it, and worked entirely by hand. First suggestion of motive *power* for weaving.

It has indeed been alleged that so late as the

year 1730, the spinning-wheel, called the *Saxon wheel*, was still the best contrivance in general use for the spinning of woollen yarn, and that the distaff and spindle were even commonly employed; but there is reason enough to believe that several spindles had been already so arranged together as to be propelled by one and the same action of the spinner. The mischief was, that the service of the slivers of carded wool and their extension (the most important part of the process) were irregular.

Wyatt's first roller spinning-machine, 1730.

In 1730, John Wyatt, of Lichfield, conceived the plan of making a machine which would materially lessen this irregularity. Such was his roller spinning-machine (intended chiefly for cotton spinning), of which he completed the model in 1733, when it was successfully tried, near Sutton Coldfield, where Wyatt was then living. In 1738, this machine, or one constructed upon the same principle, was patented by a Mr. Paul; and in 1741, a factory, provided with this contrivance, which was served by girls, and propelled by donkeys, was established at Birmingham. This factory, however, failed, and the machinery was sold in 1743. Not long after this, a similar machine, upon a larger scale, was established at Northampton.

In 1738, also, one step towards improvement was taken in the weaving of cottons. This consisted in the substitution of the fly-shuttle in place of the hand-shuttle in the hand-loom. This invention is due to John Kay, a weaver of Bury, in Lancashire.

John Kay's fly-shuttle in the hand-loom, 1738.

But matters did not stop, or even flag here. So great an impetus had been communicated to cotton manufacture, from the passing of the "Manchester Act," that ingenuity was everywhere at work to devise more economical, efficient, and expeditious means of working.

In 1767, Hargreaves invented his "jenny," a great improvement on the roller spinning-machine. This machine, when first introduced, mounted eight spindles, but it was soon excelled by a modification mounting eighty spindles, and called the *slubbing billy.*

Hargreaves' "jenny," 1767.

And the *slubbing billy.*

In 1769 the first step in the crowning effort was achieved, namely, the application of mechanical power to spinning. The substitution of the mule for the jenny was not so great a gain to the spinner. The application of power to spinning, as is well known, was due to Sir R. Arkwright, and rewarded him with one of the most colossal fortunes ever acquired.

Arkwright's power-jenny, 1769.

The great impetus thus given to spinning

rendered the application of power to weaving also a matter of essential consequence, in order that the spun yarn should not quickly exceed the demand for it, from the lack of sufficient expedition in weaving.

Cartwright's and Jeffrey's power-looms, 1787.

Dr. Cartwright, in England, and Dr. Jeffrey, in Scotland, simultaneously applied themselves to the construction of a *power-loom*, about the year 1787. The former soon brought out an engine, but it was found imperfect in some essential particulars, and Dr. Cartwright sunk some £30,000 or £40,000 in the enterprise, and ultimately failed. Messrs. Grimshaw, of Manchester, took up Dr. Cartwright's machine, and attempted to perfect it, but their mill was wilfully destroyed by fire in 1792, in consequence of the animosity which it provoked amongst the operatives. Meanwhile, Dr. Jeffrey's labour had been more successful; and although he did not carry on his enterprise to the application of his invention, it was very shortly brought into successful operation by Mr. Miller, of Glasgow, and did not excite such ill will in Scotland as it did in the manufacturing districts of England.

These improvements in the machinery employed in spinning and weaving were invented, as is well known by persons interested, in cotton

and linen, and not in woollen or silk manufactures; but it needs no particular explanation to make it understood how readily and immediately discoveries so important to the manufacturer engaged in the elaboration of any staple whatever, could and would be applied to wool, silk, or any other fibre which it was required to work up.

Resistance of operatives in woollens to power-machinery.

The improvements and facilities applicable to the spinning of woollen and worsted yarn, were indeed turned to account for that purpose, and even the *power-jenny* was employed by some of the principal master spinners; but so great was the animosity of the operatives in this trade to the use of multiplying engines generally, that the progress made in spinning woollen yarn by such means was slower than that achieved by the cotton manufacturers.

It was soon found that even for *spinning* yarn adapted for the making of fine felted cloths, the power-engine could not be sufficiently controlled to preserve the looseness necessary for effectual fulling; and as to the *power-loom* (applied to the weaving of yarns into cloths), even till our own time, it has been comparatively little used for cloths and other fine stuffs.

Nevertheless, the application of independent

Fourth great epoch in woollen manufactures.

or multiplying machinery to various branches of woollen manufacture, had effected a sufficiently decisive change in them to justify us in fixing upon the close of the 18th century as the FOURTH GREAT EPOCH in the history of the trade.

Already, before the year 1800, gig mills, as well as shearing and brushing machines, had been in use for napping and finishing even the finest cloths, much to the disgust of the operatives in many districts.

Riots adverse to machinery, 1802.

In 1802 there were serious riots in Wiltshire and Somersetshire, of which the object was the destruction of all these appliances. It was, moreover, agitated by the partisans of the operatives that the restrictive Acts of the reigns of Edward VI. and of Philip and Mary against the multiplication of machinery should be enforced; and in 1806 a committee of the House of Commons was engaged in considering these demands and complaints. This committee wisely reported in favour of the free use of machinery; and the restrictive Acts above named were repealed in 1807.

Committee of inquiry, 1806.

Repeal of restrictions, 1807.

Shawl manufacture of Paisley.

It was just about the time when these most essential changes were taking place, that a particular branch of the trade in fancy woollen goods was transplanted to Paisley, in Renfrew-

shire, where it has since attained the utmost perfection, and where it has also been vastly multiplied by the taste and ingenuity applied to it. This was the manufacture of shawls, which had hitherto been mostly made at Norwich and Stockport, places which had acquired some celebrity for their successful imitation of Indian patterns. Besides shawls, other light fancy articles of wool and worsted materials were thenceforward made at Paisley.

Origin and progress of Paisley manufactures.

But Paisley was no new retreat of manufacturing skill and industry. It had already become one of the most flourishing seats of the linen, silk, ribbon, and cotton trade, and since 1759 had severely tried the Spitalfields' silk weavers, by the eagerness of the competition which it opposed to them in the market of wrought silks.

Before the close of the 17th century, Paisley was chiefly interesting from its old abbey, which figures in Scottish ecclesiastical history. In 1695, it numbered a population of no more than 2200 souls. Before 1710, it contained some flourishing manufactories of linen and muslin. During the year 1744, the linen made at Paisley was valued at £18,887. During the year 1784, the value of this article made amounted to

£184,386. Before 1722, linen thread was also made at Paisley to a considerable extent, and this single article was soon manufactured annually to the value of £100,000. Cotton thread was soon added; and in 1759 to 1760, silk gauze, and some other silken articles, were first made. In 1772, the manufacture of other silk goods was introduced, but subsequently declined a little, in consequence of the great increase in the use of cottons. Woollens had, however, been introduced, and the shawl trade soon rose to great importance, so that in 1784 the total value of the manufactures of all kinds amounted to £579,186, and in 1789 to £660,386. The population of Paisley had necessarily increased with its progressive prosperity. In 1755, it numbered 6799 inhabitants; in 1781, 11,100; in 1791, 24,592; and in 1801, it had risen to 31,179.

Review of the entire trade.

Here, as the account will apply equally to the entire course of the 18th century (since the *third great epoch*), and to the distribution of the various branches of woollen manufacture down to our own time, it will be desirable to pass the whole trade, in the state in which we find it at the close of the 18th century, in more comprehensive and general review, and to enter

into more specific details respecting the West Riding of Yorkshire.

To render this review quite intelligible, it will, however, be needful, first of all, to notice the important change which had ere this taken place, or was in the course of taking place, in the sources of supply whence the raw material was derived.

In 1765, between 200 and 300 merino rams and ewes had been imported into Saxony (where every effort was being made to perfect the wool), and were carefully tended in the electoral farm of Stolpen. In 1778, a second and more considerable importation of merino sheep was effected in Saxony, and this time the sheep were distributed through various farms. In the meanwhile, the farm at Stolpen had produced a new (the mixed Saxon and merino) breed, of which, in the course of the thirty years ending in 1810, some 15,000 head had been distributed amongst various private proprietors. The like importation of merino sheep had been effected in England (chiefly in and after 1789); but although a society had been organized for the especial purpose of cultivating the perfection of native fleeces, the introduction of the Spanish breed produced no such beneficial result here.

As early as 1793, however, the introduction of the merino into New South Wales, and subsequently into Van Diemen's Land, laid the foundation of a breed of sheep destined to yield wool second only to that of Saxony. At the Cape of Good Hope the experiment was productive of the like satisfactory results; and there seems to be no reason for supposing that, when a sufficient amount of pains and labour can be bestowed upon the sheep, and still more upon the cleansing of the wool, our colonial wools may not fully rival those of Spain and Saxony.

On the other hand, the fine wools of Spain had declined in quality, even before the Saxon and other German farmers had secured the exquisite softness which gave such pre-eminence to their fleeces. Even in 1780, no Spanish wool could be found as good as the Saxon; still the Spanish had the command of our market until after the year 1800. The policy forced upon Spain towards England by Napoleon, the subsequent wars in the Peninsula, and, after them, the continual domestic troubles of the country, not only impaired the quality of Spanish wool more and more, but also decreased the quantity. The trade with England dwindled away. In 1714, and as late as 1799, nearly

5,000,000 lbs. had been annually imported into this country; in 1830, the quantity was less than 2,000,000 lbs.; and in 1848, it was reduced to 106,638 lbs. The subjoined table will serve to show how great a proportion of the wool imported by us before the year 1800 was furnished by Spain:—

	Spanish wool.	Other wool.	Totals imported.
1791	2,644,653	131,401	2,776,054 lbs.
1792	4,350,819	163,157	4,513,976 „
1793	1,750,151	141,234	1,891,385 „
1794	4,423,893	61,689	4,485,582 „
1795	4,764,264	138,236	4,902,500 „
1796	3,400,236	53,975	3,454,211 „
1797	4,602,805	50,891	4,653,696 „
1798	2,362,469	35,657	2,398,126 „
1799	4,891,305	44,534	4,935,839 „

In the year 1800, the total quantity of wool imported into the United Kingdom amounted to very nearly 9,000,000 lbs.; and then, as thenceforward, two decisive changes had taken place: the *first*, to the effect, that although the prohibition against the exportation of wool still remained unrepealed, it became a mere dead letter, as we became more and more largely consumers beyond the utmost supply of home-grown material; the *second*, to the effect that Germany began to furnish a considerable quantity to meet our increasing wants, to which it

afterwards became the chief contributor, until it was, in its turn, supplanted by our own colonies. In 1800, Germany supplied us with nearly half a million pounds of wool; in 1814, with three millions and a-half; and in 1827, with twenty-two millions.

Another circumstance, which it will be convenient to notice in this place, is the decisive change which had set in as affecting our export woollen trade, and which warrants the observation, that the United States, since their independence, almost immediately furnished a profitable outlet for our manufactures, which they had but sparingly consumed when yet subject to the British Monarchy. The French Revolution, no doubt, did a great deal to stimulate our woollen trade by extinguishing almost all enterprise in that line in France; and as the French Republican Government, with extremely impartial folly, committed outrages as well against its grateful friends, the Americans, as against its hereditary enemies, the English, it repelled the revival of external commerce through those active traders, and drove them back to renew amicable and mutually profitable relations with Great Britain.

Subsequently, even the huge combination

which Napoleon contrived to erect against the commerce of England signally failed in dealing any severe shock to our woollen manufactures. For though it be true that between 1802, when the total value of our exported woollens amounted to £7,321,012, until 1836, when their value amounted to £7,998,044, the general range of the trade was considerably lower—excepting, indeed, the year 1818, when the value of woollens exported reached £8,145,327—it must be borne in mind that a multitude of causes conspired together to reduce the external commerce of every country in Europe (or even in the civilized world), during some portion of that period, and that the woollen trade particularly was affected by the more active, enterprising, and progressive character of the cotton trade.

Between 1789 and 1800, the state of our export trade in woollen fabrics may be discerned from the subjoined table, in which the declared values of those goods, as exported to the whole world (including the United States), are placed in juxtaposition with the declared values of such of them as were exported to the United States alone, evincing the large proportion in which our former fellow-subjects contributed to our manufacturing prosperity :—

	To the whole world.	To the United States alone.
1790	£5,190,638	£1,481,379
1791	5,505,034	1,621,797
1792	5,510,668	1,361,754
1793	3,806,536	1,032,954
1794	4,390,920	1,391,878
1795	5,172,884	1,982,318
1796	6,011,133	2,294,942
1797	4,936,355	1,901,987
1798	6,499,339	2,399,935
1799	6,876,939	2,803,490

After the United States, the next best customers for *British* woollens were Ireland (before the Union), the East Indies, Portugal and its dependencies, Germany, Holland till 1795 (when it became virtually a part of France), Spain till 1798 (when it fell completely under the dictation of France), Italy until 1797 (when it became virtually a great French province), the remaining British North American colonies, and the West Indies.

Let us now return to the consideration of the progress and distribution of our woollen manufactures at home. In the West of England, whether during the last century or in our own time, we find Gloucestershire occupying the most important position in the manufacture especially of the finest broadcloth, as well as of some other cloths, mostly made of the best Spanish wool, and subsequently of the finest Saxon or Austra-

lian material. Wiltshire, which is somewhat equivocally included in the same section, may be said to rank second, not so much as to the quality of its broadcloths as in respect of the extent to which the manufacture is carried on. In Somersetshire, the manufacture of superfine cloth is limited to one or two places. In Dorsetshire, the woollen fabrics principally made are baizes and flannels. Devonshire contributes the fabrics known by the technical name of *long ells*, which are mostly finished at Exeter, whither they are conveyed for sale by the scattered makers. But this trade has greatly decayed of late years. In the same district is included the formerly noted seat of *plush* manufacture, which, however, has likewise fallen off. This kind of stuff was formerly the staple article produced at Modbury.

Gloucestershire.

The districts called the *Bottoms*, in Gloucestershire, of which Stroud is the centre, and which include Stonehouse, Painswick, Biesly, Leonard, Stanley, Horsley, etc., as well as the neighbourhood of Dursley, Wickwar, Cam, Wotton-under-Edge, Alderley, comprise the greater part of the cloth manufactories.

Wiltshire.

In Wiltshire, Bradford boasts of one of the most active and important places in the realm for

the manufacture of superfine cloth. Heytesbury, Warminster, Trowbridge, Chippenham, Melksham, etc., besides Wilton, also contribute much fine cloth.

West Riding of Yorkshire.

Next in importance to the West of England, in the manufacture of all kinds of woollen cloth, is the West Riding of Yorkshire. As to the extent and activity of its trade, this part of England may more properly be said now to have attained the first rank, especially since, of late years, it has not been wanting even in the production of the finest of broadcloths, such as even Stroud, Dursley, or Bradford (in Wiltshire), might have been proud to claim as their own.

Formerly, however, the West Riding had the reputation rather of endeavouring to produce substitutes for superfine cloth, which could be rapidly and economically made, than of striving to vie with Gloucestershire and Wilts in point of quality. The good clothiers of Yorkshire are much accused of having been addicted to the admixture of inferior materials, as is evident from the multitude of *regulating laws* which they drew down upon themselves from a Parliament so zealous in "preventing frauds," and in providing for the "good and proper making of woollen cloths!"

The imputation we believe to have been as unjust as the laws in question were impolitic. The Yorkshire clothiers, shrewder than their southern and western brethren, very early discerned the advantage reaped by the Dutch, and by the rising manufactures of Germany, from the supply of coarse, inferior kinds of cloth and other woollen stuffs for the German, Baltic, and South American trades especially, to say nothing of our own colonies. They argued very justly that all they attempted to do was to make such stuff as the consumer wanted, and to meet their competitors as well as they could, both as to quality and price; that comparatively few people, even in England, Holland, France, Spain, or Italy, where refinement was much advanced, were purchasers of superfine cloth; whereas, in all the world, they found a large demand for the inferior stuffs which had offended the fastidious; and that as they and the other English clothiers were restrained from making such marketable cloth, they had lost a great part of their foreign trade, and had succumbed before cotton at home.

Notwithstanding these little vexations, however, the Yorkshire clothiers were too earnestly engaged in their craft to be arrested in their

career. Rapidly did they increase in substance and influence, multiply in numbers, and spread around them a sphere of congenial activity.

Rise and progress of Leeds.

As early as the beginning of the 17th century, Leeds (since and to our time the great rallying point of the West Riding cloth trade) had already grown into some consequence. In 1626, the borough was incorporated by charter granted by Charles I., and this charter was confirmed in 1661 by Charles II., and again in 1684 by James II. In 1627, the foundation was laid of the plan for connecting Leeds and Wakefield, by rendering the rivers Aire and Calder navigable—an undertaking which has greatly facilitated the district woollen trade. In 1767, the line of canal was surveyed for the connection of Leeds and Liverpool, and powers were conferred for the completion of this undertaking by Acts passed in the 10th, 23rd, and 30th years of the reign of George III.

Thus was the whole of the West Riding brought into easy communication with the shipping port most conveniently situated for the transatlantic trade.

The population of Leeds latterly increased very fast. In 1775, it numbered 17,117 souls; in 1801, 30,699; in 1811, 35,950; in 1821,

48,603; besides 35,143 contained in the adjoining townships. In 1851, the population of Leeds alone proved once more largely increased.

At Leeds there are two cloth-halls, or markets, in which the small makers (chiefly) offer their unfinished fabrics for sale to the owners of finishing factories. One of these halls is devoted to the *mixed* cloth trade, and was founded in 1758; the other is appropriated to the *white* cloth trade, and was founded in 1775. There are similar halls at all the principal manufacturing towns of the West Riding.

Rise and progress of Huddersfield.

Huddersfield (unlike Halifax and Wakefield, of which we have already spoken) dates its rise to consequence within the last century. Its cloth-hall was founded in 1766. It is connected with Manchester on the one side, by means of the Huddersfield Canal, and with Halifax, Wakefield, Leeds, York, and Hull on the other, by means of the Ramsden Canal.*

Rise and progress of Halifax.

Halifax, which in 1580 (see *antea*) contained 4160 inhabitants, had increased to 1973 houses and 8886 inhabitants in 1801, and to 2734 houses and 12,628 inhabitants, in 1821. At the last-named date, the population of the entire

* Since the construction of such a network of railways as that which has taken place of late years, these canals have lost much of their importance; nevertheless, it would be neglect to leave them unnoticed.

parish was 92,850, and in 1828 it had increased to 104,269.

Quantities of broad and narrow cloths made.

But the rapid progress of woollen manufacture throughout the West Riding of Yorkshire is rendered still more appreciable by a review of the quantities of broad and narrow cloth officially returned as having been made within that district at different periods. Thus—

In 1726 there were only 746,788 yards of broad cloth made.
In 1738 there were 1,187,312 yards of broad and 405,860 yards narrow.

In 1800	„	9,263,966	„	6,014,420	„
In 1805	„	10,079,256	„	6,193,317	„
In 1813	„	11,702,837	„	5,515,755	„

Worsteds, baizes, and flannels.

And these were exclusive of the great and rapidly increasing trade in worsteds (especially at Bradford, Halifax, and Leeds), the baizes and flannels of that portion of the West Riding which is in the vicinity of Rochdale (in Lancashire), and of the endless variety of miscellaneous articles which were added from year to year to the list of wrought goods.

In the neighbourhood of Rochdale, yet within the West Riding of Yorkshire, besides broadcloths and kerseys, there were also considerable quantities of flannel and baize made. In fact, this district has supplanted Colchester, formerly the seat of the latter trade (in baize), and shares

the greater part of this manufacture with Bury, in Lancashire, a small quantity of baizes being also made at Chichester.

Wakefield and the immediate neighbourhood are chiefly celebrated for superior dyeing and for the making of white cloths; whilst Saddleworth vies with the West of England in the manufacture of superfine broadcloths and kerseymeres. Wakefield and Saddleworth.

At Dewsbury, a comparatively recent branch of the trade has attained a flourishing condition. This is the manufacture of what is called *shoddy cloth*, a texture which contributes largely to the supply of the army and navy contract clothing, and also finds vent in the rough pilot and Petersham cloths. The peculiarity of this stuff is its material. It consists of waste ends of miscellaneous woollen stuffs and rags, which are unravelled and remade. Dewsbury.

The market of Leeds is the chief *depôt* for white and mixed cloths. Halifax and the immediate neighbourhood are more particularly engrossed with the narrow cloth trade, and with that in flannels and baizes. The white cloth manufacture is mostly concentrated between the valleys of the Aire and the Calder, whilst that of mixed cloth for the most part occupies

those two valleys either around Leeds or near Wakefield.

Blankets are made in the district between Leeds and Huddersfield.

Worsteds of Bradford, Yorkshire.

Bradford has long since stripped Norfolk of a large part of its trade in worsted yarns and fabrics, just as Paisley has supplanted it in the manufacture of shawls. The greater part of the worsted yarn required to supply the looms which are still wrought in Norfolk (formerly the chief seat of the manufacture of camlets, crapes, and bombazines, as well as of shawls), is now spun at Bradford, or in Lancashire, Warwickshire, or Leicestershire.

With respect to other branches of the woollen trade, and other districts, we find the most noted market for blankets still centred at Witney, and an active manufacture carried on at Dewsbury, and in the neighbourhood; besides what are made (as already observed) in the West Riding of Yorkshire, and the very considerable trade carried on in these goods in Glamorganshire, and manufactures on a more limited scale at Chichester, and near Kilkenny, in Ireland.

Worsted hosiery of Leicestershire.

Worsted hosiery is chiefly made in Leicestershire, and particularly at Loughborough; but this branch of the trade also still subsists at Godalmin,

in Surrey, and is more actively carried on about Hawick, Selkirk, and Dumfries, in Scotland.

The manufacture of flannels has its chief seat in North Wales (besides the districts already named), at Galashiels and Jedburgh, in Scotland, and in Shropshire. The flannels made in the county of Wicklow, in Ireland, are comparatively trifling in quantity. Flannels of North Wales and Scotland.

The principal market for Welsh flannels is at Welshpool, but the trade is largely carried on throughout Montgomeryshire.

Carpets are made chiefly at Kidderminster, Wilton, Cirencester, Worcester, Axminster, in England, and in Kilmarnock and Stirling, in Scotland. The finest are those of Wilton and Axminster, which rival Oriental fabrics. Carpets of Kidderminster, Axminster, etc.

Druggets are still made to a considerable extent in the district of Kendal, Ambleside, and Keswick, which has yielded almost all its other important branches of trade to the West Riding of Yorkshire. These goods are also made in Cornwall, Devonshire, and Somersetshire. Druggets of Kendal, etc.

The remaining branches of the trade are also trifling, and need be noticed only to render this review complete. Of this nature are the shalloons, serges, and worsteds of Andover, Basingstoke, and Alton, in Hampshire, the coarse cloths of Taunton

and Chichester, and the coarse woollen stuffs of Kendal and Keswick.

Tartans and plaids of Scotland.

In Scotland there is an active trade in a variety of woollen goods, which are, as it were, nationally peculiar: such as tartans, plaids, etc. (besides the fine shawls of Paisley), which are made at Galashiels and Jedburgh, as well as in Argyleshire, Stirling, and Inverness. The cloths made in Scotland are chiefly coarse, but there are also some fine cloths made, particularly in Aberdeenshire.

In North Wales, besides flannels, we should notice the webs of Merioneth, and the socks, stockings, and gloves, which are, more or less, made throughout the whole district.

Irish woollen manufactures.

Only a little broadcloth is made in Ireland, and that in the neighbourhood of Cork and of Dublin. The woollen trade has never revived in that country since the iniquitous Act of 1698. The removal of the prohibition against the exportation of Irish woollens to foreign markets, in 1779, came too late. Moreover, several restrictions were still left to trammel woollen manufacture in Ireland until 1823, although by the Act of Union, in 1800, some important facilities had been conceded, notwithstanding the opposition of the British clothiers, supported as it was by the exaggerated statements of their advocate, Lord Ellenborough.

That there had been a prodigious increase in the woollen manufactures of this country during the 100 years which ensued after the Revolution of 1688, is very evident, from the rapidly-increasing population and prosperity of the districts in which they were concentrated, as well as from the multiplication of these districts, besides the important fact of the increased production and consumption of the raw material, and the gradual decrease of its (illicit) exportation.

Near, and shortly after, the close of the last century, other and more striking evidence of this increase was furnished by the great addition to the quantity of wool imported—more even than by the additional value of exported woollens—which is, in some degree, to be attributed to exorbitant war prices. Since the general peace of 1815, these evidences are still more marked.

Progress of the production, importation, and consumption of wool.

Yet, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, when this country was only estimated to produce some 30,000,000 lbs. of wool annually, and when but little was imported, the manufacture of woollens was supposed to have employed some 700,000 hands. Towards the middle of the 18th century, when the United Kingdom was estimated to produce annually some 80,000,000 lbs. of wool, the manufacture was supposed to employ about

Number of operatives employed.

1,500,000 hands. In 1774, it was estimated that the quantity of wool annually produced in England alone amounted to some 60,000,000 lbs., from about 12,000,000 sheep (an estimate which, if correct, points to considerable deterioration of quality, when each fleece averaged 5 lbs. in weight), and valued at about £3,000,000 ; and that the manufacture employed 1,000,000 hands, and was worth about £9,000,000 annually. This estimate would have given a total quantity of wool produced in the United Kingdom amounting to some 78,000,000 lbs. annually, and the net importation introduced about 3,000,000 lbs. more. In advocating the cause of the English clothiers in 1800, Mr. Law (since Lord Ellenborough) urged that the number of hands employed in the woollen trade at that time amounted to at least 1,500,000, and that no less than 5,000,000 persons were directly or indirectly interested in the prosperity of the trade. This was, obviously, a great exaggeration. Subsequent calculations have been much more moderate. Mr. Stevenson reckoned the total value of the woollen manufactures at £18,000,000, and the number of hands directly employed at 500,000 ; and Mr. M'Culloch, writing as late as 1854, pronounces the annual value of the manufactures to be £26,000,000, and the

number of hands employed under 400,000. We think this must be somewhat underrated, for the woollen trade still employs more hands in proportion to the quantity of materials elaborated, than either cotton, silk, or linen. And, notwithstanding the observation of so high an authority, founded, as it is, upon the statement of some persons eminent in the trade, we cannot but think that the two more recent estimates may be nearly reconciled with the others, always excepting Mr. Law's. For, in the first place, it is not unlikely that the estimates made in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and in 1739, may have been intended to include all persons indirectly as well as directly concerned in sorting, spinning, weaving, dyeing, teazle growing, etc.; in the second place, the rapidity introduced into the various processes of manufacture has certainly occasioned a great proportional decrease in the number of hands required for the work, and the great increase in the manufacture of cottons, silks, and linens has gradually drafted off a very much greater number of the operatives to those kindred crafts than can readily be imagined, so that the enumeration of weavers, spinners, dyers, etc., *specifically* engaged in manipulating wool and woollens, has been rendered comparatively small.

It is hardly reasonable to suppose either that Mr. M'Culloch's painstaking calculations are materially erroneous, or that the reckonings made during the last century are so. Both were founded upon somewhat ample materials. During the last century, accounts were regularly kept of the details of the manufacture in each district, to subserve to the fiscal regulations then in force; and as to present materials, the last and previous census of the population, by furnishing an analysis of the avocations of people residing in each district respectively, have effectually supplied the place of the manufacturing accounts above-named, and which have been discontinued since 1813.

How then, but by some such considerations as we have suggested, is it possible to explain the discrepancy between a calculation numbering some 1,000,000 of persons engaged in elaborating about 80,000,000 lbs. of wool, and the present enormously increased quantity of wool (about three times that just mentioned), wrought up by less than 400,000 persons?

In the year 1800 it was very credibly estimated that the total production of wool in the United Kingdom amounted to 96,000,000 lbs. The total importation in that year amounted to nearly 9,000,000 lbs. In the year 1854, the total quan-

tity of wool produced in the United Kingdom was reckoned at 129,600,000 lbs.; and the total quantity imported, including alpaca, and llama, etc., amounted to 106,121,995 lbs. The quantity exported was comparatively trifling.

Changes in the course of importations.

With respect to the importation of wool into this country, which has become so large a trade in recent times, the most interesting features are the changes which have occurred in the source of supply—firstly, German wool supplanting Spanish, and then British colonial (chiefly Australian) supplanting both in a great degree. We have already alluded to the respective situations of German and Spanish wools in the British market, during the early part of the present century. The permanent and increasing demand was not so strikingly evinced until after the peace; and colonial wools only began to make a figure in the market from about 1820, and to make rapid way after 1830.

A return, presented to Parliament in 1846, thus states the quantities of foreign and colonial wool respectively imported during a series of years, together with contemporaneous prices of Southdown and long Kentish wools, presenting facts which, whilst they illustrate the foregoing remarks, are of great interest in themselves:—

Return of the quantities of foreign and colonial wool imported, and prices of British wool.

Years.	Foreign, in lbs.	Colonial, in lbs.	Totals, in lbs.	Price per lb. of Southdown.	Long Kent.
				s. *d.*	*s.* *d.*
1818	24,720,139	...	...	2 6	2 0
1819	16,094,999	...	...	1 7	1 3
1820	9,653,366	122,239	9,775,605	1 5	1 4
1821	16,416,806	205,761	16,622,567	1 3	1 1
1822	18,859,265	198,815	19,058,080	1 3	0 11
1823	18,863,886	502,839	19,366,725	1 3½	1 0
1824	22,147,540	416,945	22,564,485	1 2	1 1
1825	43,465,282	351,684	43,816,966	1 4	1 4
1826	14,747,103	1,242,009	15,989,112	0 10	0 11
1827	28,552,742	562,599	29,115,341	0 9	0 10½
1828	28,628,121	1,607,938	30,236,059	0 8	1 0
1829	19,639,629	1,877,020	21,516,649	0 6	0 7
1830	30,303,173	2,002,141	32,305,314	0 10	0 10½
1831	29,110,073	2,541,956	31,652,029	1 1	0 10½
1832	25,621,298	2,461,191	28,142,489	1 0	1 0½
1833	34,461,527	3,614,886	38,076,413	1 5	0 10½
1834	42,684,932	3,770,300	46,455,232	1 7	1 7½
1835	37,472,032	4,702,500	42,174,532	1 6	1 6
1836	57,814,771	6,425,206	64,239,977	1 8	1 8½
1837	38,945,575	9,434,133	48,329,708	1 3	1 3
1838	42,430,102	10,164,253	52,594,355	1 4	1 5
1839	44,504,811	12,875,112	57,379,923	1 4	1 5½
1840	36,498,168	12,938,116	49,436,284	1 3	1 2½
1841	39,672,153	16,498,821	56,170,974	1 0	0 11
1842	27,394,920	18,486,719	45,881,639	0 11½	0 10
1843	26,633,913	21,151,148	47,785,061	0 11½	0 11
1844	42,473,228	22,606,296	65,079,524	1 2	1 2
1845	*44,524,183	*32,289,672	76,813,855	1 4	1 3

It was during the period included in the foregoing statement, that the duties upon foreign and colonial wool were successively abolished. The restrictions upon the trade in the raw ma-

* These amounts are not in the return of 1846, but appear in two returns furnished in 1853 and 1854.

terial had been gradually removed since the peace of 1815, and, ten years later, exportation was allowed, and has continued to be so, the former prohibitions having been at last acknowledged to be nugatory as respected consumption and price, vexatious as regarded the dealers as well as the producers, and injurious to commerce in general, by barring those dealings (a constant source of national profit) in which we interpose as the middlemen between foreign markets.

The duties imposed upon all wools imported in 1818 amounted to $\frac{3}{4}d.$ a pound. In 1819, and until the close of 1823, they amounted to $6d.$ a pound. In 1824, a sliding scale of duty in proportion to value was imposed, that duty being $1d.$ a pound on all wool worth more than $1s.$ a pound, and $\frac{1}{2}d.$ on all wool worth less than $1s.$ In 1825, and thenceforward, colonial wool was admitted free, and in 1844 the duty on foreign wool was also abolished.

Of the quantities of British wool exported, we have only occasional records. In 1845 the quantity amounted to 9,059,448 lbs., when that of foreign or colonial wool re-exported only amounted to 2,662,353 lbs.

Respecting the re-exportation of imported foreign and colonial wool, however, we have

more particulars: witness the following return, which shows of how much consequence must have become the untrammelled operation of our dealings as warehousemen:—

In 1841 ... 2,554,455 lbs.	In 1846 ... 3,011,980 lbs.
„ 1842 ... 3,637,789 „	„ 1847 ... 4,809,725 „
„ 1843 ... 2,961,282 „	„ 1848 ... 6,575,584 „
„ 1844 ... 1,972,674 „	„ 1849 ... 12,450,497 „
„ 1845 ... 2,662,353 „	„ 1850 ... 14,388,674 „

Recurring, on the other hand, to the importations, we find them exhibiting a general tendency to increase. Inclusive of the alpaca and llama wools, the sum of foreign and colonial yearly introduced of late years is shown in the following figures:—

In 1846 ... 65,255,462 lbs.	In 1850 ... 74,326,778 lbs.
„ 1847 ... 62,592,598 „	„ 1851 ... 83,311,975 „
„ 1848 ... 70,864,847 „	„ 1852 ... 93,761,458 „
„ 1849 ... 76,768,647 „	„ 1853 ... 119,396,445 „

and in 1854, 106,121,995 lbs., of which 1,267,513 lbs. were llama, alpaca, etc., and 47,489,650 lbs. Australian. The declared values of these quantities were as follows: for 104,854,482 lbs. miscellaneous, no less than £6,372,253; and for the 1,267,513 lbs. of llama, alpaca, etc., £126,751. These latter kinds of wool had, during the course of the ten years then expiring, been in tolerably regular demand. In 1845, the quantity im-

ported amounted to 1,261,905 lbs., of which 53,192 lbs. were re-exported. In the same year we find also that 1,241,623 lbs. of mohair were imported, of which 114,001 lbs. were re-exported.

Of the relative importance of different foreign countries, as sources of supply, and especially as compared with our Australian colonies, the following particulars will convey a correct idea:—

QUANTITIES OF WOOL IMPORTED INTO THE UNITED KINGDOM FROM

Years.	Spain. lbs.	Germany *ex* Prussia. lbs.	Prussia. lbs.	Australia. lbs.
1841	1,088,200	20,958,775	165,125	12,399,090
1842	670,237	15,613,269	171,012	12,959,671
1843	597,091	16,805,448	132,317	17,433,780
1844	918,853	21,847,687	271,845	17,602,247
1845	1,074,540	18,484,736	211,844	24,177,317
1846	1,020,476	15,888,705	343,847	21,789,346
1847	424,408	12,673,814	51,131	26,056,815
1848	106,638	14,429,136	70,919	30,034,576
1849	127,559	12,750,011	17,062	35,879,171
1850	440,751	9,166,731	29,523	39,018,221

Besides the supply obtained from Australia, considerable quantities of wool have been, and are, also furnished by British India and South Africa. These supplies, with those of all other British dependencies, will appear in direct comparison from the following statements:—

QUANTITIES OF WOOL IMPORTED INTO GREAT BRITAIN FROM

Years.	British India.	South Africa.	Gibraltar.	Malta and Gozo.	British N. America.	Mauritius.
	lbs.	lbs.	lbs.	lbs.	lbs.	lbs.
1841	3,008,664	1,079,910	25,678	124,989	4,881	—
1842	4,246,083	1,265,768	—	36,653	12,122	912
1843	1,916,129	1,728,453	5,663	20,723	13,125	37,983
1844	2,765,853	2,197,143	372,167	15,496	12,887	18,721
1845	3,975,866	3,512,924	484,291	116,721	18,280	—
1846	4,570,581	2,958,457	809,524	22,448	40,366	32,801
1847	3,063,142	3,477,392	336,358	326,061	37,550	20,207
1848	5,997,453	3,497,250	286,075	94,145	—	8,222
1849	4,182,853	5,377,495	288,143	176,304	55,262	—
1850	3,473,252	5,709,529	489,476	51,282	7,582	—

Years.	British West Indies.	Channel Islands.
	lbs.	lbs.
1841	5,014	—
1842	2,163	1
1843	12,807	—
1844	2,701	—
1845	4,103	170
1846	5,430	862
1847	5,141	112
1848	7,934	—
1849	4,794	14
1850	5,728	8,446

Western Africa, New Zealand, and Falkland Islands.

From Western Africa, in 1846, 4095 lbs.; from New Zealand, 272 lbs., in 1841; and from the Falkland Islands, 112 lbs. in the latter year;—that is to say, until 1850—merely casual supplies from these parts.

With respect to the trade in British manufactured woollen goods, exclusively of the great enhancement of demand for home consumption evinced by the prodigious increase in the quantities of raw wool required for manufacture, the steady progress of exportation, although small in proportion to that of some other goods, will

serve to show that there has been a healthy activity of late years, although after a decade of great depression. The total value of woollens (including worsted and woollen yarns) annually exported from Great Britain for a series of years will be discerned from the following figures :—

In 1818	...	£8,145,327	In 1837	...	£4,989,075
1819	...	5,989,622	1838	...	6,179,604
1820	...	5,586,138	1839	...	6,694,965
1821	...	6,462,866	1840	...	5,780,810
1822	...	6,488,167	1841	...	6,300,821
1823	...	5,636,586	1842	...	5,822,350
1824	...	6,043,051	1843	...	7,533,120
1825	...	6,185,648	1844	...	9,163,053
1826	...	4,966,879	1845	...	8,760,042
1827	...	5,245,649	1846	...	7,243,373
1828	...	5,069,741	1847	...	7,897,402
1829	...	4,587,603	1848	...	6,510,803
1830	...	4,728,666	1849	...	8,432,946
1831	...	5,389,124	1850	...	10,040,332
1832	...	5,479,786	1851	...	9,861,727
1833	...	6,540,726	1852	...	10,161,074
1834	...	5,975,415	1853	...	11,625,720
1835	...	7,149,602	1854	...	10,681,371
1836	...	7,998,044			

In the detail of this export trade, there is one feature interesting from its curiosity, and as suggestive of a very widely-extended sphere of demand, which, by judicious management, may properly be secured hereafter, and this is the share which the Chinese market has latterly

taken in the consumption of our woollens. It was formerly thought that the Dutch had greatly the advantage of us in the Eastern seas, owing to their exclusive intercourse with Japan, of which the climate was supposed to be more generally congenial to the use of woollen fabrics than that of China. But we are well aware that the immense area of China presents climatorial varieties of great range. We also know that even high temperature is not a bar to the use of woollens, although it favours the use of the lighter kinds. The prodigiously numerous population of China (if it be not overrated at between 350 and 400 millions) naturally suggests a very expansive market, when once fairly opened. And even in Japan we are now on an equal footing with the Dutch, or perhaps enjoy much greater facilities of trading than they heretofore possessed.

The tendency of events, notwithstanding interruptions and delays, the zeal and ability of the agents of Government, and the eager readiness of British enterprise to push on whenever and wherever the way is open, are all circumstances which point out the likelihood of a very great market for our woollens in this direction.

Of old, the East India Company entered into an engagement to take up British woollens annually to a given value, and to export them and force their sale within the sphere of its peculiar trade. This was a sop thrown out to secure the influence of all those concerned in the British woollen trade in behalf of its own pretensions to monopoly. When reproached, without very much reason, with having been instrumental in bringing about the depression which afflicted the woollen trade nearly throughout the 17th century, the East India Company boasted that it had continued to force the sale of British woollen goods at a loss. The truth of the matter was, that the Company did undertake to dispose of certain quantities, and (for its own purposes) took up those quantities, whether it was or was not in the way of disposing of them to great advantage, but that it failed in securing its opportunities for such operations.

China was, until 1833, within the pale of the Company's exclusive privileges; and it was a stereotyped argument in the mouths of those who advocated the continuance of these interests, that the trade with China would necessarily fall to the ground as soon as it was

thrown open ; whereas, the adverse party argued that the trade must necessarily be increased to a great extent by being rendered free. Both parties were wrong to a certain extent:—the Company, in supposing that the exclusion of its countrymen secured admission from the Chinese ; the opposition, in supposing that freedom from the Company was freedom with the Chinese.

The result was, that no very decided change occurred for a considerable time. Ultimately, however, the continual presentation of great numbers of people—rendering the Chinese more and more familiar with Western civilization, power, wealth, enterprise, and industry—was, and is, certain to lead to such a change in the Chinese mind itself as to worm through the heart of that curious and prolific nation.

Nothing can be more convincing evidence that this change is not only in steady progress, but that it is already far advanced, than the dispersion of Chinamen amongst transmarine people—as in Australia, California, and Europe, for instance (for the distribution of the servile coolies in various parts is hardly a fair example) —and the readiness with which they adapt themselves to the crafts and habits of Western civilization, returning, as they do, with accu-

mulated wealth to their own country, where they cannot but inoculate their own people with new tastes, new principles, and new ideas.

The revolution which has long been in progress in the interior of China, and which gradually makes head, and streams away towards the seat of the central power, is also a proof that great social innovation is going on. And the calmness (almost indifference) with which all other ports to which we have had, and continue to have access, in China, observed what had been taking place at Canton, is a proof that the principle upon which the Viceroy's opposition was founded had lost much of its national vitality.

In 1833, however, when the East India Company's charter was lopped of the exclusive trade with China, and for some years afterwards, that country was almost an unknown land. The merchants of the Hong, and those of the rapid borough of Liverpool, looked quaintly at each other. The former had been represented as little better than ogres to the men of Lancashire. Then came the opium quarrel.

The values of British woollen manufactures annually taken by the Chinese, from 1824 to 1845 (both inclusive), were as follows :—

In	1824	£532,221	In	1835	£527,134
	1825	652,047		1836	659,588
	1826	849,024		1837	246,536
	1827	461,472		1838	409,672
	1828	618,412		1839	335,210
	1829	491,122		1840	164,142
	1830	474,493		1841	212,565
	1831	399,885		1842	146,680
	1832	466,102		1843	417,815
	1833	534,670		1844	565,428
	1834	583,055		1845	539,223

Having now noticed most of the incidents and fluctuations in the history of the woollen trade, both at home and abroad, which are likely to be of general interest to the reader, and having thus traced this very important branch of industry and commerce down to our own time, we feel that the first section of our subject is as complete as we can hope to render it within the necessarily circumscribed limits of a publication of this kind.

In continuing our subject, as it were, discursively, from time to time, as may be most conveniently and interestingly done, there are many instructive and amusing particulars which we propose to ourselves to introduce. But this we must defer until we have fulfilled our purpose,

and fairly finished the two supplementary sections, without which the allusions which we were obliged, for conciseness' sake, to leave unexplained in the foregoing pages, would, in many cases, be more or less obscure.

THE END.

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